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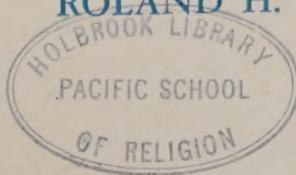
# SOCIAL ACTION

## The Churches and War: Historic Attitudes Toward Christian Participation

A Survey from Biblical  
Times to the Present Day

by

ROLAND H. BAINTON



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## **SOCIAL ACTION Magazine**

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LISTON POPE, *Editor*

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## FOREWORD

This survey of changing Christian attitudes toward participation in war may best be read in conjunction with the report presented by a special commission to the Federal Council of Churches, Nov. 28, 1944, on "The Relation of the Church to the War in the Light of the Christian Faith." It was published both as a pamphlet under the imprint of the Federal Council, and as the issue of *Social Action* for December, 1944. A glance at pp. 60-61 of the report will help to make clear the relationship between the two documents. The present study is not a part of the report, but a supplementary document, prepared at the request of the Commission by one of its members, used, debated, and subjected to considerable revision in the course of its deliberations, and now printed as a document for further careful study.

Professor Roland H. Bainton, the author of the study, has devoted close attention, during years of teaching and research as professor of ecclesiastical history in Yale University, to the problems treated especially in the first half of the paper. Much work remains to be done on both the earlier and the later parts of the field. No definitive survey of the whole field has yet been written, and the author expressly disclaims finality for the present study. The choice, arrangement and interpretation of the material here presented are the work of an individual scholar. At the same time, the author has given consideration to the critical comments of his colleagues in the Commission, and has taken especial pains to seek and to utilize their counsel respecting the accuracy of his statements of fact.

The document in its present form is offered, therefore, as a contribution toward the clarifying of a very difficult problem in the history of Christian life and thought. Though some members of the Commission would have desired a different emphasis in parts of the document, the Commission as a whole, without adopting it as its corporate utterance, recommends it to the

Churches as a much needed and very valuable survey.

(Signed)

ROBERT L. CALHOUN, *chairman*  
JOHN C. BENNETT, *secretary*  
For the Commission

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Roland H. Bainton is Titus Street Professor of Ecclesiastical History in Yale University and a specialist in Reformation history. Among his published books are: *Castellio's Concerning Heretics*, 1935; *The Church of Our Fathers*, 1941; and *The Life of George Lincoln Burr*, 1943.

During the first World War Dr. Bainton served with a Quaker unit of the American Red Cross. He is a minister of the Congregational Christian church.

# The Churches and War: Historic Attitudes Toward Christian Participation

by ROLAND H. BAINTON

Various attitudes have been taken by Christians throughout the centuries to the ethical problem of participation in warfare. Whereas the majority, certainly since the time of Constantine, have found fighting in a just war to be compatible with the spirit of Christ, a minority has continuously dissented and has thus kept the problem to the fore. The circumstances of our time have again made the issue acute, and, although public discussion speedily diminished after the outbreak of hostilities, the determination of the degree to which the coming peace is to be maintained by force of arms will necessitate a fresh examination.

The reality of the problem and the failure to achieve a universally acceptable solution are apparent in the degree to which Christians in recent times have reversed positions previously held. These reversals have taken place in opposite directions. On the one hand, after the declaration of war both in Britain and the United States membership in the pacifist Fellowship of Reconciliation increased. On the other hand, during the same period an unprecedented proportion of the young men of the historic peace churches entered the armed forces. Their secession may be interpreted partly as a phase of growing conformity to the environment, but it is to be understood also in part as the outcome of a searching re-appraisal of the historic witness and the conviction that in our day evils have arisen so monstrous that they must be resisted even by war.

Most positions espoused by Christians in our day have behind them a venerable tradition and presumably a measure of validity which an historical analysis may serve to reveal. No historical survey can lay claim to finality because the relevant evidence has not always been adequately recorded and in dealing with that which remains the historian is subject to limitations of

ignorance, prejudice and defective insight. Nevertheless a review, however tentative, of persistent Christian attitudes to participation in warfare should minister to clarity and sobriety of judgment in the solution of those problems by which we are and are to be confronted.

## The Period Up To World War I

The main Christian attitudes toward service in armed conflict between states are three and are popularly known by the captions of "pacifism," "the just war," and "the crusade." The first renounces participation; the other two endorse it but in differing manners. All three involve a decision for or against participation. In the just war theory, that decision is contingent upon a judgment that a particular war on one side is just. The pacifist may endorse this judgment but reject warfare as a means. The crusader adds the further judgment that the particular war is not only just but also holy. The just war theory entails a code for humane conduct in war. The pacifist obviously lies outside the code and the crusader frequently disregards it.

### *The Just War Theory*

The doctrine of the just war is above all concerned for justice. The war in which the Christian is to take part must appear to be objectively just and warfare must appear as an instrument capable of vindicating justice. Underlying the just war theory is a view of human nature as so far corrupted that at times sin can be restrained only by coercion even to the point of taking life. At the same time men are sufficiently uncorrupt that they may be trusted, if their own interests are not involved, to see where justice lies and to execute it without vindictiveness. For this reason the sword of the magistrate has been ordained by God to restrain the evil and to protect the good (Rom. 13). In civil government the impartiality of the magistrate is safeguarded by a segregation of functions as to the enactment of law, the determination of guilt and the infliction of penalty. The theory of the just war is based upon the analogy of civil

justice. One obvious weakness of the theory is that in international relations no machinery of justice has ever existed comparable to that achieved in the civil sphere. The Christian advocates of the just war concept freely concede the imperfection of the analogy, but contend that, even when national self-interest is involved, a particular state may nevertheless be, relatively to other states, a custodian of justice.

The proponents of the just war theory have found a Biblical basis for their view in those passages, such as Romans 13, which enjoin obedience to civil rulers. More abundant material was found in the Old Testament for the construction of the portrait of the godly magistrate like Moses and the judges and kings of Israel. A code for the just war was discovered in Deuteronomy 20. But the main source of the concept and the details of the theory were drawn from Roman Stoicism.

### *The Crusade*

The concept of the crusade is built about holiness and holiness is primarily the characteristic of God. A holy war is such because God wills it. The distinction between the just war and the holy war is not absolute because defense of justice also is willed by God. Yet in practice there has been a difference, inasmuch as justice was commonly interpreted in terms of the vindication of the rights of property and persons, whereas the crusade theory has been applied to the defense or extension of the faith. By analogy in modern times the idea has been extended to wars waged for ideals such as the ending of war or the making of the world safe for democracy.

A different view of human nature underlies the theories of just war and crusade. The crusader is at once more pessimistic and more optimistic with regard to mankind. The enemy is painted in more somber colors because he is blind to the ideal, whereas the soldier of the cross feels himself to be superior since through him God will vindicate His truth. In consequence a difference of mood is engendered. The soldier of the just war goes about his task as a grim responsibility, whereas the crusader views fighting in a holy cause as a religious privilege, a service to God and a way to salvation.

The Biblical basis for the crusade was discovered to some slight extent in the New Testament, in the holy indignation of Jesus against the money changers, and in the war cries of Armageddon (Rev. 16:16). The Old Testament offered richer and more appropriate material in the holy wars of theocratic Israel during the conquest of Canaan and the revolt of the Maccabees.

### *Pacifism and Its Varieties*

Pacifism in Christianity emphasizes love. This is not to say that the other positions deny love. The soldier in the just war is always enjoined to entertain no hate in his heart, even for the enemy. The taking of life is not considered incompatible with love since the destruction of the body does not entail the annihilation of the soul. The crusade is commonly more inclined to stress love for the victim or for God, a love calling for indignation against the oppressor and the infidel. But the pacifist recalls that Jesus commanded love toward enemies (Mt. 5:44), presumably public as well as private, and the taking of their lives is held to be at variance with love. Even though in war a few choice individuals may be able to kill and love at the same time, the masses are incapable of so doing and wars are not won by those who love their enemies. Hence in practice warfare and love are at variance.

Pacifism within Christianity is not all of one stamp. Some pacifists are legalists and absolutists, taking their stand upon such texts as "Thou shalt not kill" (Ex. 20:13), "Resist not evil" (Mt. 5:39), "Put up thy sword" (Mt. 26:52). These legalist conscientious objectors have been the easiest for secular authorities to recognize because their stand is simple, unequivocal and absolute. They give no consideration to the social consequences of their actions and do not expect to influence the unregenerate majority of mankind. The chosen of the Lord will always be few and as sheep among wolves. Their future, however, is not considered to be utterly bleak, since God will vindicate His own either in the life beyond death or through a second coming of the Lord on earth. For some, indeed, paci-

fism has been only an *ad interim* position until the trumpet should summon the saints to the fray; contemporary representatives of this position are the Jehovah's Witnesses, who for that reason have often experienced difficulty in receiving recognition as conscientious objectors.

Another type of pacifism is the rational and pragmatic, holding that war is needless and that a refusal to participate is the best way to eliminate it. Undergirding this position is commonly a faith in the rationality of man. Among reasonable human beings all difficulties can be solved by the matching of minds. Some exponents of the view have gone so far as to contend that pacifism is itself a technique for the overcoming of injustice, that non-resistance will soften the heart of the tyrant, that those who turn the other cheek will not be struck. Representatives of this position in varying degrees are found among Roman Stoics, Renaissance humanists, 18th century rationalists, and modern liberal Protestants.

A third variety of pacifism may be called the redemptive. It gathers up, modifies, and enlarges the other two. There is an absolute that consists not in mere Biblical commands, but in God's plan of the universe. He is the Author of order and concord and in His integrated creation means and ends are so intimately related that violence is an inappropriate instrument with which to further justice. Warfare, though unable to thwart God's will, may yet impede His purpose. To some extent this variety of pacifism resembles the pragmatic type, though never with the naive assurance that non-resistance will immediately disarm the aggressor. On the contrary, the non-resistant must expect to suffer like Christ upon the cross, but as the Master's pangs proved redemptive even so will the sufferings of his servants. Hence arises the faith that in the long run non-violent resistance to tyranny will prove effective in overcoming evil and the stripes of the suffering servant will be for the healing of the nations. This attitude is discoverable to some extent in the early church, and more particularly among the sects of the Reformation and the Puritan revolution, and again among

modern liberal Protestants.

Still another variety of pacifism skirts the fringes of Christianity. Its emphasis shades from the preservation of personal holiness to faith in the sacredness of life. Some religious groups appearing under the Christian name have regarded the body as evil and contact with matter, and especially blood, as defiling. For the sake of personal holiness contamination must be avoided from the shedding of blood, whether of men or of animals. The sexual act is also regarded as defiling. Hence, in such groups, pacifism, vegetarianism and celibacy come to be associated. These ideas have manifested themselves in Gnosticism, Manicheanism and Catharism. But there is often conjoined another motif: that life is sacred and will be hurt if violence is done to the will to live within even the prison house of the body. The Indian doctrine of *ahimsa* enshrines this view, and Albert Schweitzer's tenet of "reverence for life" casts it in less extravagant form.

### *The Early Church Prevailing Pacifist*

These three attitudes toward participation in warfare emerged in Christian history, roughly speaking, in the order, pacifism, the just war, and the crusade. The period from Christ to Constantine was prevailingly pacifist.

The situation of the Church during these first three centuries was that of a persecuted body. Yet the attitude of the Church to the Empire was one of qualified approval. The emperor claiming to be God was a man of sin, but the Empire was nevertheless a force restraining the powers of darkness. Rome had conferred great benefits upon mankind for which the Christians were glad. The seas had been cleared of pirates and the roads of brigands. Within the confines of the Rhine, the Danube and the Euphrates security reigned. The Christian missionary was happy to avail himself of the Roman peace for the spread of the gospel. The methods by which Rome had attained her dominance were not condoned. Neither was the outcome despised. The early Christians were increasingly at a loss to know whether they preferred to see the continuance of the Roman

peace or the coming of the Lord, which must be preceded by wars and rumors of wars. In the second century the Montanists who looked for the immediate coming of the Lord were repudiated and in the third century the time of his coming was advanced now by 200 and then by 300 years. The Christians were perfectly clear that they were not to precipitate his coming by grasping the sword after the manner of Jewish Messianists. In the interim, whether short or long, Christians regarded themselves as citizens of heaven, sojourners on earth, but nevertheless as the soul of the world and the cement of society. They maintained that by their peaceful demeanor and brotherly love they were giving spiritual reality to the Roman peace and converting it into the peace of Christ.

The problem of war was not particularly acute for the majority of Christians. The three rivers and Hadrian's wall protected the frontier and a comparatively small army, coupled with a liberal immigration policy, sufficed to cope with the barbarian pressure. The army was maintained on a voluntary basis. Only free men were admitted and many Christians would therefore be ineligible because they were slaves or freedmen. In the third century when soldiers on garrison duty were permitted to marry, their sons were expected to follow the profession of their fathers. Except in such an instance a Christian was under no constraint and would indeed be deterred from enlisting because the avoidance of idolatry was more difficult in the army than in civilian life, especially for officers and to some extent for privates. The main question was whether a soldier converted in the service should remain. The problem was complicated because the army was assigned many functions which are now differentiated and committed to civilian branches, such as the fighting of fire, the keeping of the peace in the cities, and the suppression of brigands in the country, together with the construction and repair of roads and bridges. At such tasks a Roman soldier might serve for a lifetime without ever being called upon to take a life.

During the second century, military service did not present itself to the church as an acute issue, at least until the last two

decades. From the end of the New Testament period down to 170-80 we have no evidence of any Christians in the army and also no statement that a Christian would be excluded from the Church were he to join the ranks. The writings of the Fathers in this period contain praises of peace and denunciations of war, but no express statement that a Christian could serve under no circumstances. The closing years of the second century and the whole of the third were marked by increasing notice of Christians in the army and increasing protest against their presence. Christianity was spreading in the camps and converts were remaining at their posts.

### *Police Service in the Army Allowed*

The Church was discriminating in her rules. Christians were suffered to remain in the army so long as they were engaged only in tasks entailing no shedding of blood. This appears clearly in the Canons of Hippolytus in the early second century which require that "a soldier of the civil authority must be taught not to kill men and to refuse to do so if he is commanded."<sup>1</sup> Clement of Alexandria, who in many passages describes Christians as soldiers of peace rather than of war, nevertheless demands of the soldier convert not that he forsake his profession but only that he follow God, "the righteous General."<sup>2</sup> Tertullian, who rejected all military service, nevertheless recognized the distinction when he inquired, "How will a Christian take part in war, nay how will he serve even in peace?"<sup>3</sup> The canon of the Council of Arles under Constantine in 314 threatened with excommunication a Christian who should lay down his arms in time of peace. Dr. Moffatt discerningly suggested the interpretation that the door was thus still left open to withdrawal in time of war.<sup>4</sup> St. Martin of Tours, in the period after Constantine, on conversion remained in the army

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1. Burton Scott Easton, *The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus* (New York, 1934), Pt. II, Canon 16, p. 42.

2. *Exhortation X*, 100.

3. *Idolatry XIX*.

4. *Dictionary of the Apostolic Church* II, 670a, written in 1918.

for two years until an actual battle was imminent and only then declined longer to serve.<sup>5</sup>

Military service in war time is nowhere commended and often condemned by Christian authors of the age of persecution. The Christian soldiers were inarticulate and their defense is recorded only by their critics, from whom we learn that appeal was made to the example of Joshua and the advice of John the Baptist to the soldiers.

The pacifists of the early Church were the writers and the leaders. Their views can be recovered in sufficient fullness to discern the main outlines of the types of pacifism already described. Basic to them all is an emphasis on Christian love and the belief that the taking of life in war is incompatible with love. Those who shared this common presupposition diverged in their emphases.

Tertullian was an absolutist and a legalist who asserted that "Christ in disarming Peter unbelted every soldier."<sup>6</sup> The meek should look for their vindication in the life to come. In his later years Tertullian joined the millenarian Montanists but his pacifism can scarcely have arisen as a result of his expectation of the return of the Lord because the statement cited above was penned well in his orthodox period.

Origen represents the rational, pragmatic type. He accepted the taunt of the pagan Celsus (writing about A.D. 180) that no Christian would serve in the armies and justified their abstention on the ground that Christians had a better way of dealing with the barbarian problem. Christ the winsome "Word (or Reason) would prevail over the entire rational creation, and change every soul into His own perfection."<sup>7</sup> In the meantime Christian prayers would prove a better defense than the armies of the legionaries.

Marcion suggests redemptive pacifism when he says that Moses "stretched forth his hands to God in order that he might

5. Sulpicius Severus, *Life of Martin.* ↗

6. *Idolatry* XIX.

7. *Against Celsus* VIII, 72, written A.D. 246-48.

destroy many in war, but our Lord . . . stretched forth His hands [upon the cross] not in order that he might destroy men, but in order that he might save."<sup>8</sup> At other points Marcion is closer to the holiness type of pacifism. The body appeared to him to be evil, and marriage was forbidden to all believers. The Creator was reproached with having made a world full of flies, fleas and fevers. Pacifism, when associated with such views, is commonly derived from a fear of defilement. On the other hand Marcion's invective against the God of the Old Testament was directed chiefly against his vindictiveness and an antithesis was drawn between the spirit of Paul who said that we should not let the sun go down upon our wrath and the spirit of Joshua who held the sun up till his wrath went down.

The early Christians prayed, however, for rulers and even for armies, not necessarily that they might be victorious over their enemies but that they might "lead a quiet and tranquil life in all piety and gravity." (I Tim. 2:1-3). On the other hand Tertullian, of all people, prayed that the armies might be *brave*.<sup>9</sup> Such prayers reinforce other indications that Christians recognized varying ethical levels and considered bravery more commendable than cowardice in those committed to the use of war in a just cause.

### ***Little Pacifism on the Eastern Frontier***

One qualification to the pacifism of the early Church is geographical; on the Eastern frontier, menaced by the Persians, the Constantinian revolution was anticipated by a century. Abgar IX, king of Edessa (A.D. 179-216), was the first Christian king in all history. He was converted in A.D. 202 and for the remainder of his reign made Christianity the official religion of Osrhoene. We may infer with reasonable assurance that the king of a frontier province was no pacifist and would never have embraced Christianity had he supposed that all Christians

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8. Adolf Harnack, "Marcion," *Texte und Untersuchungen*, XLV (1921), p. 104.

9. *Apology* XXX.

would decline military service. He had good reason for an opposite assumption because the first Christian soldiers mentioned after the New Testament period, members of the so-called Thundering Legion (A.D. 173), were recruited not far from his region in the province of Melitene in southern Armenia. In that same district early in the fourth century, when a persecuting emperor attempted to enforce idolatry, the Armenian Christians took up arms and defeated him.<sup>10</sup> In Palmyra in A.D. 278 Paul of Samosata was the first bishop to hold the post of a civil magistrate and to employ a *body-guard*.<sup>11</sup> In the fourth century Bishop James of Nisibis inspired the defense against the Persians by calling upon the name of the Lord, who sent clouds of mosquitoes and gnats to tickle the trunks of the elephants and the nostrils of the horses on the side of the enemy.<sup>12</sup>

These examples before and after Abgar indicate a continuous tradition of military service on the part of Christians on the Eastern frontier. But the Constantinian revolution was anticipated in another respect. When the State favored the Church and the Church sanctioned warfare, a cleavage took place within the Church itself and the more rigorous spirits adopted a strenuously ascetic and even monastic life with a repudiation of military service.

### ***The Christian Roman Empire and the Just War***

When Constantine embraced the faith and conquered the empire, the Church found herself in a new situation. Persecution was at an end. The emperor had removed the primary grievance of the Christians by relinquishing his claim to divinity. The Church passed from a tolerated to a favored position. So largely did the State appear as the custodian of order that Christian writers began to see the hand of God in the coincidence of the birth of Christ and the institution of the empire by Augustus. A close association of Church and State followed.

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10. Eusebius, *Church History* IX, 8,2-4.

11. *Ibid* VII, 30,8.

12. Theodoret, *Church History* II, 26.

The emperor acted as a lay superintendent and the bishops traveled in senatorial coaches.

The military victories by which Constantine had risen to power and ended the era of persecution appeared also as a work of God and a Lactantius, whom Dr. Moffatt described as the most Tolstoyan of the early Fathers, could hail an armed champion of the cross as the Lord's anointed. Christians increasingly accepted military service. In the year A.D. 416 the Emperor Theodosius II decreed that only Christians would be permitted in the ranks. In the meantime that cleavage occurred throughout the Church which had already been evident on the Eastern frontier. When the masses departed from rigorism, the rigorists migrated to the desert, dissociating themselves alike from families, goods, politics and war. Thereafter monasticism became the purveyor of the pacifist ideal.

The leaders of the Church in the first flush of their enthusiasm over the cessation of persecution did not at once wrestle with the ethical problems involved in military service. An initial attempt at a harmonization of the Christian ethic with warfare is found in the writings of St. Ambrose. A comprehensive theory was elaborated by St. Augustine for whom the protection of the Roman peace against the barbarian hordes already devastating France and Spain appeared as the defense of order against chaos.

Augustine availed himself of the classical theory of the just war originating in Platonic and Stoic circles and popularized by Cicero. The first condition was that the object of the war must be just, namely to vindicate justice and to restore peace. The determination of the objective justice of the struggle rested with the head of the State acting in a magisterial capacity. Augustine failed to see that the conditions which safeguard the administration of civil justice did not exist for the adjudication of conflicts between states. The justice of maintaining the *Pax Romana* against barbarians, who were also either pagans or heretics, appeared to him axiomatic. Justice could scarcely be on their side because genuine justice is possible only in a Christian State. And plainly they were aggressors, though aggression is

not necessarily unjust if undertaken to vindicate justice. The second condition in classical thought was that the conduct of the war must be just, observing good faith and humanity, avoiding treachery, wanton violence and injury to non-combatants.

Augustine added to the classical requirements the just intention, which is to benefit alike the victim and the oppressor by protection for the one and a benevolent restraint of the other. Though participation in a just war is thus morally right a sensitive and sinful man will not relish the task of exercising discipline but will discharge his obligation with both resoluteness and heaviness of heart. He has the consolation that justice can be on only one side at a time. The classical theorists by stressing the rules for the formal declaration and the humane conduct of the war had left open the possibility of justice on both sides. Augustine by focussing on an initial wrong to be righted fixed the blame on one side only. The theory of "sole guilt" originates with him.

The pacific and pacifist elements in earlier Christian thought were conserved by Augustine through a graded ethic applying first to the ruler, responsible for the determination of justice and the inauguration of hostilities; next to the citizen, who might serve as a soldier at the behest of the ruler and in reliance on his judgment as to the justice of the cause. The citizen in his civilian capacity, however, should suffer death rather than take arms without the authority of government. Ministers, for vocational reasons, should be exempt from military service and monks for the additional reason that they are set aside to practice the counsels of perfection.

The ethic as thus developed by St. Augustine prevails in Catholicism to this day, and in many branches of Protestantism save for the elimination of monasticism. The just war theory received further elaboration in the Middle Ages. During the predatory raids of an unsettled society the recovery of property was added as one of the objects of the just war. The number of non-combatants was increased to include not only women, children, the clergy and monks, but also travelers, merchants

and farmers. A pragmatic note was introduced in the late Middle Ages when a reasonable chance of success was made one of the conditions for the justice of the war. The most notable development was the implementation of the idea by an approximation of the machinery of civil justice through the arbitrament of the popes, though the theocratic pretensions of the papacy not infrequently led to the fomenting of wars.

### *The Middle Ages and the Crusade*

The Christian Roman Empire which had held sway from the Euphrates to the border of Scotland largely disintegrated in the 5th century and survived only in a restricted area in the East until the fall of Constantinople before the Turks in 1453. In the West the barbarian flood poured over the lands to the north of the Mediterranean from the Danube to the Irish Sea and the Arabs engulfed the provinces to the south up to the Pyrenees. The northern invaders were gradually converted from paganism or heresy to Christian orthodoxy. In the course of centuries a Christendom emerged, a Christian civilization reaching roughly from Rome to Stockholm, united by Christian faith, with medieval Latin and northern French as common languages for much of the West, acknowledging papal suzerainty in matters spiritual and the tenuous overlordship of the Holy Roman Empire in the secular sphere.

The old stability of the Roman Empire was not recovered. Even an occasional vigorous ruler, a Charlemagne, an Otto the Great, or a Frederick Barbarossa, was not able to establish the order prevailing in the age of the Antonines. The northern invaders were warlike tribes, who even after settlement upon the land continued predatory raids on one another. Internecine feuds between nominal Christian rulers were far removed from the public campaigns waged by Roman legionaries in defense of a common civilization. The just war theory of an Ambrose or an Augustine was difficult to apply under such circumstances. The condition that one object of the war must be the restoration of peace was not palatable to chieftains who preferred to raid

rather than to raise cattle. The pacific precepts of Christianity went quite over their heads and if the missionaries declined to translate for them the warlike books of Kings from the Old Testament, the barbarians had their revenge by transforming Jesus into a tribal war god. The first Christian poem in the German language celebrates the exploit of that doughty knight St. Peter who wielded his broadsword and clave clean the ear of Malchus. Amid the turbulence, even priests and monks donned armor above cassocks and cowls in contravention of the code still regarded as applicable to men in their station.

The Church was confronted with a task of appalling difficulty in taming the warlike propensities of her new parishioners and molding them into an orderly people. Inasmuch as no political organization was able to keep the peace, the Church herself stepped into the breach, assuming direction and even control of political affairs in an increasingly theocratic fashion. The first efforts of the Church were directed toward curbing and humanizing feudal warfare by such restraints as the rules of chivalry, the Peace of God and the Truce of God. In the 11th century in France, Germany and Italy a great peace movement was sponsored by the Church. Princes took vows to refrain from molesting an ever enlarging circle of non-combatants. This was the Peace of God. The next move was to reduce the open season for hostilities by placing a taboo upon holy days in such number that scarcely a quarter of the year remained available for warfare. This restriction was the Truce of God. When the vows were not observed militiae were organized by churchmen in Germany, France and Italy for the enforcement of the peace, but when the Church's peace fighters themselves wasted the land the municipalities raised other forces for their suppression.

The disheartening failure of such methods to pacify and unify Europe led to an attempt along new lines. If warlike propensities could not be eradicated, then let them be rechanneled. In 1095 Pope Urban at the Council of Clermont in France made a powerful plea for peace within Christendom and war against the Moslems in the Holy Land. Thus began the first of eight crusades. In a sense they were comparable to the public wars

of Rome against the enemies of her peace and could therefore more readily be squared with the ethic of the just war than could the private raids of feudal barons, but in other respects the crusades marked a departure from the concept of the just war. The call to arms came not from the civil ruler but from the Church as the spokesman of God even in the political sphere, and the response of Pope Urban's listeners was the shout *Deus Vult*. The ruler himself took the cross at the behest of the Church. The common soldier might accompany his lord but he did so now not by reason of a civic obligation but as a volunteer in a holy enterprise in which his reward, apart from incidental booty, was divine favor and assurance of heaven. The exclusion of the clergy and even of the monks broke down. Defections in practice had occurred earlier but had been disconcerted. The first of the crusades marked a notable change in that a bishop as a papal legate led the enterprise, and in subsequent crusades some of the fiercest fighters were the newly organized monastic military orders of the Temple and the Hospital. The attitude of the participants in this church-fostered warfare differed also from the older Christian attitude of conscientious participation in a spirit of resolute though regretful performance of civic duty subject to carefully prescribed restrictions. The crusade was marked by an enthusiastic participation in warfare as a religious privilege and by a diminished regard for humanitarian restraints. The temper was strangely compounded of barbarian lust for combat and Christian zeal for the true faith against the enemies of God and Christ.

The crusading enterprise against the Moslems in the East fell into disrepute and suffered many criticisms, few of them strictly pacifist. Some critics objected to shipping the scum of Europe to the Holy Land; others decried the financial abuses; some considered the enterprise ill-starred and preferred to pasture their cows or court Nicolette. A few, especially among the Franciscans, contrasted the blood-thirstiness of the crusades with the meekness of the gospel. But the idea of the crusade did not die. Well into the Reformation period popes were organizing crusades against the Turks, and Columbus intended

to consecrate the profits of his western voyage to the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre. More significant was the transfer of the concept of the crusade to wars in Europe, sponsored by the Church against such heretics as the Albigenses and Hussites who retaliated with a holy war of their own.

### *Pacifism in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*

Plainly pacifism did not flourish in the Middle Ages. Until the crusades its exemplars were the clergy and the monks. When clericalism and monasticism were in a measure militarized the repudiation of war was taken up by dissenting groups, sometimes within the ecclesiastical structure, as occasionally in the new mendicant orders, but more commonly outside of the framework of the Catholic Church in schismatic or heretical sects. We have some indications that the Waldenses were pacifists. The Cathari would not kill a chicken, though many of them defended their own lives in the Albigensian war. The explanation may be that the group was divided into the Believers and the Perfect, and that the latter alone observed the more exacting tenets. The Bohemian Brethren for a generation were indisputably pacifist. Wyclif and the Lollards have some very trenchant denunciations of war which do not necessarily entail pacifism.

The era of the Renaissance brought a movement of practical if not of completely theoretical pacifism. The political situation in Europe had been altered since the crusades through the rise of the nations. France, England and Spain had rounded out their borders to natural geographic frontiers and within those limits had developed centralized government with the imposition of the king's peace. Nationalism within the confines of the nation was a force making for order. But the new nations entered into conflicts with one another on a scale more widespread and in a manner more devastating than in the wars of the Middle Ages. The code of the just war scarcely seemed applicable to the conflicts of Christian kings, who so demeaned themselves that Machiavelli, observing their conduct, declared

the preservation of the State to be the only object of politics and war. The papacy after many vicissitudes found itself somewhere between an arbiter among the nations and a little Italian principality engaged in manipulating a precarious balance of power.

A group of humanists headed by Erasmus and More sought to revive the ideal of Christendom, a society of men bound together by the love of Christ and committed to the exercise of humanity toward one another. The just war was not eliminated as a conceivable possibility but contemporary wars were deemed to fall short of its conditions. The missionary method might better be substituted for war against the Turk and European princes should rest content with their territories and compose their differences as beings endowed with reason. This Erasmian rationalism was to enjoy a great vogue in the 18th century and breathes through the peace project of an Immanuel Kant and the practical measures of such statesmen as Franklin and Jefferson. In much more radical form it was taken up by the Anabaptists of the Reformation.

### *The Reformation: Tradition Conserved and Modified*

The age of the Reformation again shifted the scenery on the European stage. Just as nationalism made for tranquillity within states but disrupted the semblance of unity embodied in the Holy Roman Empire, so likewise the Reformation intensified the religious life within all communions but rent the seamless robe of Christ in the ecclesiastical sphere. There resulted in some countries established churches with little or no tolerance for dissenting bodies. This was notably true in Germany, where Lutheranism became an established church and with the aid of the State crushed Anabaptism. In England the Anglican Church was established but was driven, as a result of the Puritan revolution, to accord a place to a large number of non-conformist denominations. In the United States the various establishments of the colonial period were abandoned in the early 19th century in favor of a system of separation of Church and State in which, however, the churches exert marked influence upon political

life. The attitudes of the churches to the State and to warfare have been in a measure conditioned by the altering character of political relations and their own place in the State and society. In some instances, however, the principles espoused by the churches have determined the character of their external situation; the Anabaptists, for example, in many cases were not pacifists because they were persecuted, but were persecuted partly because they were pacifists. But the variant circumstances of Lutheranism, as an established religion after 1555, and of Calvinism, forced to fight or succumb in Geneva, France and Scotland, go far to explain their relative positions with regard to the just war and the crusade.

### ***Just War Theory: Catholics, Lutherans and Anglicans***

After the Reformation the just war theory continued within Catholicism with this modification, that increasingly the casuists dropped the Augustinian condition that the war must be just on one side only. That concept proved less and less workable in a progressively secularized society which no longer called upon the pope to arbitrate and in which rulers, still for the most part nominally Christian, went to war on both sides in the name of justice. For Catholics, indeed, many of the conditions of the just war as formulated in the Roman Empire by Augustine and reformulated by Aquinas have grown ever more difficult of realization.

The established churches of the Reformation took over the just war idea with some alterations. Monasticism had been rejected by Protestantism and a special group was no longer set aside for the vocation of observing literally the more exacting precepts of Jesus. This situation may well explain why Protestantism has placed such emphasis upon the Christian home, where there is no mine and thine and the members of the household are readier to yield than to cause a hurt. In consequence the dichotomy drawn by Catholics between the everyday ethic of the Church in the world and the more exacting ethic of the monastery has tended to transfer itself in Protestantism to a split

between public and private ethics.

Lutheranism took over the concept of the just war. Luther declared in his tract *On Civil Government* that the world cannot be ruled by a fox tail but only by a sword. A sober view of human nature concludes that men in the mass will never be able to live in accord with Christ's precepts of meekness and non-resistance. In a nominally Christian society the genuine Christians are few. Were they to withdraw and set up a community of their own they might dispense with the sword. But Christian love demands that they remain with and assist their less Christian brethren in the administration of justice under the authority of the civil ruler alike in peace and in war. The Christian neither relishes nor shirks his civic obligations. With a good conscience and a heavy heart he undertakes to punish the violators of justice. This work belongs to the State, never to the Church, which should undertake no theocracy and no crusade. The citizen fights as a citizen, not as a Christian. In his private life as a Christian he must be entirely non-resistant. Ministers for vocational reasons, as in Catholicism, are to refrain from participation in warfare. Their task is to bless the just warrior and curse the unjust. War on behalf of the faith is distinctly excluded. The Turk is to be fought, not because he is a Turk, infidel, or polygamist, nor even because he persecutes Christians within his own lands, but only if he invades the territories of another State. A Christian prince should equally be resisted in such a case.

The Anglican Church adopted the same ethic. The Thirty-nine Articles affirm that "It is lawful for Christian men to wear weapons and serve in wars." William Ames summed up the common view in his *Conscience with the Power and Cases Thereof* (1643). War is always an evil, he said, because there cannot be a just war without an unjust war on the other side. Nevertheless Christians may participate in good conscience unless they know the war to be manifestly unjust. The authority of the prince is necessary who, along with the officers of high rank, is responsible for the determination of justice. The inno-

cent will undoubtedly suffer but they are to be injured as little as possible.

### *Just War and Crusade in Calvinism*

The crusade idea was never to be fully revived after the manner of the Middle Ages, with the Church as an institution actually conducting wars, but certain elements of the crusade were to reappear. A revolution always has this in common with a crusade that it is fought not under but against the authority of the prince. A war fought primarily for the defense of an ideal tends to be a crusade, especially if that ideal is religious. In that case the mood of the warrior is often that of the crusader. These conditions were to be fulfilled chiefly in Calvinism. The reason lies partly in circumstances.

Lutheranism for a brief period only was threatened with extermination and during that time developed a doctrine of resistance by armed force. The formula of the just war was conserved by a theory of constitutionalism whereby one department of government might serve as a check on and offer resistance to another. In Germany this meant that the territorial princes of Lutheran faith might offer armed resistance to the persecuting Catholic emperor. The pressure was soon relieved and state establishment was accorded to Lutheranism by the Peace of Augsburg in 1555. Thereafter the Lutheran Church in Germany could bless her sons as good Christians and citizens discharging their civic duties in peace and in war.

Calvinism, partly by reason of different circumstances, was to be more revolutionary than Lutheranism, and on that account passed at times from the just war theory to that of the crusade. The doctrine of the just war, to be sure, continued to be basic. Calvin held that "Princes are armed . . . also to defend the territories committed to their charge by going to war against any hostile aggression; and the Holy Spirit, in many passages of Scripture, declares such wars to be lawful." (*Instit.* IV, xx, 11). The Westminster Confession asserted that "It is lawful for Christians . . . to wage war upon just and necessary grounds."

But that element in the just war theory which requires that the war shall be fought only under the auspices of the constituted authorities is difficult to square with a rebellion against them. Calvinism in such circumstances made use of the harmonistic device already employed in Lutheranism, and extended the constitutional theory of resistance by one branch of the government to another to the situation in France where the upper nobility might resist the king and to the situation in England where Parliament might resist the crown. But when Parliament itself had to be purged the theory was abandoned in favor of a war not under the prince but under God.

The war speedily became not only formally but also emotionally a crusade. *The Souldier's Pocket Bible* of the Ironsides (1643) epitomizes the tone when over against "love your enemies" are set the verses "Dost thou help the wicked and love them that hate the Lord?" (II Chr. 19:2), "Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate Thee? . . . I hate them with an unfeigned hatred as they were mine utter enemies" (Ps. 139:21-22). The summary is that the soldier must "love his enemies as they are his enemies and hate them as they are God's enemies."

### ***Pacifism Among Anabaptists and Quakers***

Pacifism, no longer represented by monasticism, passed in Protestantism to the custody of the sects. In the 16th century they were the Anabaptists. In some respects they resembled monastic movements in their rigoristic moral discipline. They were not monastics because they shared in family and economic life, yet for the most part they dissociated themselves from political participation. Not only, in their view, are Church and State to be separate, but the Christian is a citizen only in the sense that he obeys all the commands of government not contrary to the word of God. No active participation in politics is permitted because the State is ordained of God solely for the sake of the world and should be administered by the world. The saints must keep themselves unspotted, and exercise an

influence on society, if that be possible, rather by example than by participation. This in general is the traditional position of the Mennonites and Hutterites who stem directly from the Anabaptist movement. The Church of the Brethren, originating in Germany in the early 18th century, adopted the same view. These groups have found survival easiest in frontier communities where segregation could be achieved. In modern centralized states they have frequently been granted exemption from military service, largely because the armed forces could easily be manned without them and their contributions to the common weal in non-political areas were too valuable to be forfeited by their expulsion. At the same time in those countries where segregation was difficult, their pacifist position has been gradually abandoned.

The affinity between pacifism and the crusade appears in the one instance in which the Anabaptists took the sword and erected a theocracy at Münster. The small sect, composed only of those who aspire to be saints, if it does resolve to fight will regard its war as God's will and its sword as the sword of Gideon.

The Quakers in 17th century England represent a variety of pacifism embodying more of the rational, pragmatic and redemptive elements. They objected to war, not only as a violation of love but also as carnal, by which they meant that it is a struggle of bodies rather than a matching of minds and a waiting for the inner light to produce unity. Because of their faith in the light that lighteth every man they addressed their appeals to the entire community and did not segregate themselves from the common life even in the political sphere, but participated in government up to the point of war. The determination of the line beyond which they could not go was often highly difficult.

### *The Churches and North American Wars*

The modification of the historic positions in the environment of the United States is interesting. For centuries in our land the great established churches of the Old World, such as the Roman

Catholic, the Lutheran and the Anglican, were for the most part minority groups. Nevertheless not infrequently the ethic congenial to their tradition survived under new conditions. The early 19th century placed all of the churches on a plane of equality with reference to the State and mutual influence has led most of the Protestant groups toward increasing movement in unison so that one can properly speak of a common mood of the churches in the two World Wars. In some instances, however, the influence of the environment in particular sections is noticeable, and in certain instances differences of tradition are discernible in contemporary cleavages.

In the colonial period the ethic of the just war was predominant but the mood varied not a little in accord with the estimate of the enemy. The Indians could be identified with the Amalekites whom the Lord intended to displace for the sake of the chosen people. The French Roman Catholics were considered to be the acolytes of Anti-Christ against whom crusades were appropriate. The Dutch, being fellow Protestants, were to be withheld solely in terms of the code and mood of the just war.

The Revolutionary War, because a revolution, had something of a crusading quality. The New England clergy gave forthright assistance to the Colonial forces, except that some of the Anglicans were Tories. The "peace" churches held aloof. The War of 1812 was very unpopular in the New England community. A study of the attitude of the churches to this war has not yet been made. The Mexican War revealed sectional differences. The warmest sanction came from the Southern Baptists near the Rio Grande, and the coolest comments emanated from the Congregationalists and Unitarians in remote New England. The Civil War divided the Methodists, the Baptists, the Presbyterians, and the Lutherans along sectional lines. In the North the churches with the tradition of establishment, that is the Roman Catholic, the Lutheran and the Anglican, supported the Union under the rubric of the just war as the suppression of a rebellion by the constituted authorities. The churches of Pur-

itan tradition, with whom in the New World the Methodists were associated, looked upon the war more as a crusade for the abolition of slavery. In the Spanish-American War the churches refused to be stampeded by the outcry over the sinking of the *Maine*, but a speech by Senator Proctor on Spanish maladministration in Cuba precipitated a general plea among the churches for a holy war, especially among the Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, Disciples and Unitarians. The Episcopalians, Lutherans, and Roman Catholics were again more restrained.

### *Changes in Modern Times*

In the centuries since the Reformation a number of changes have taken place in the structure of society and the State, in the methods and character of warfare, in the organization of persons concerned for social reform, and in the manner in which Christians of opposing convictions regard each other.

The change in society and the State dates from the rise of the nations in the period prior to the Reformation. Nationalism, as we have seen, involved a more stringent control over the lives of all citizens in the interests of order and peace. The subsequent development has been in the direction of the exercise of unique and absolute political authority by the national State. The tendency has reached its culmination in the totalitarian countries. The democracies have endeavored, with much success, to set limits to political absolutism, yet even in the democracies the freedom of the individual has been progressively curtailed in the interests of his security. The Industrial Revolution has made all the elements in the community so interdependent that the less powerful are likely to be crushed unless the State affords them protection. The old dictum of the church father Irenaeus that the State was devised to keep men from devouring one another like fishes thus receives a new exemplification.

In the case of war the integration of the State has come to mean the involvement of all citizens. Since the Napoleonic period in all the great powers every male has become liable to mil-

itary conscription, and no member of the community is exempt from some measure of participation. When Luther inquired whether a soldier could be in a state of salvation he was thinking of a special profession. Today he would have to include himself, though a minister, and his wife and children. Every farm and factory has become a potential armorer's shop, and every railroad a supply line for troops to the front. No form of constructive enterprise is possible which the government will not in one way or another utilize for the purposes of war. The frontier, where separatist religious communities could segregate themselves from the life of the world, has practically disappeared. Dissociation from war is no longer possible as in former times.

The character of war, meanwhile, has changed so that many of the older distinctions have been blotted out. Close blockades and obliteration bombing pay no heed to the difference between the combatant and the non-combatant. While civil justice has advanced in differentiating classes of offenders, war has improved in deadliness and deteriorated in discrimination. The civil courts make a distinction between the juvenile and the adult, the first offender and the second, the sick and the well, the deranged and the sane. Night bombers, robots and rockets are incapable of precision. Under such circumstances, the old ethic of the just conduct of war is manifestly difficult to maintain.

Meanwhile, for Christians concerned for the prevention of war, there developed an alternative to monastic or sectarian separatism: association with like-minded persons in independent societies organized to further social reforms. The nineteenth century saw the rise of many such associations seeking the abolition of slavery, reform of prisons, suffrage for women, legal dissemination of information on birth control, and prohibition of intoxicating liquors. A part of this general movement was the formation of peace societies. They became popular in the United States after the War of 1812, possibly through disillusionment with regard to the war, but more probably as a phase

of the wider tendency. The existence of these societies has eased the strain on the unity of the churches whose members, when they differ on social issues, feel no necessity either to force an agreement or to disrupt the church.

A further change affects the concept of conscience, which was increasingly individualized during the course of the Puritan revolution in the 17th century. A distinction had long been made between the objective and the subjective rightness of conscience. Thomas Aquinas recognized that a man might be both sincere and mistaken, and that even an erroneous conscience was binding until corrected. Yet St. Thomas did not consider the sincere but erroneous conscience as a proper ground for the refusal of military service. The only conscience which may rightly reject the command of a prince is one which is better informed than his own. The Latin word for conscience, *conscientia*, is based on the word *scientia* meaning knowledge. The citizen who may justifiably decline to serve in a war waged by his country is the one who *knows* it to be unjust. The same ground was taken by Martin Luther. But the Puritan revolution produced such a spawning of sects and such a range of clashing claims to knowledge as to inspire a new consideration of the validity and authority of conscience. For St. Thomas and Luther the knowledge in terms of which conscience was to be measured was a system of truth established by revelation. The rival systems claiming to be true in the 16th and 17th centuries injected a doubt as to the finality of any traditional formulation, and led to the view that truth has not been fully revealed in a closed system but must be hammered out in the clash of opinions. Conscience then took on a new significance as more than the citadel of a man's private integrity. That integrity itself came to be regarded as an indispensable condition for the common attainment of truth. For that reason, however much individuals might differ and however acutely the State and the citizen might clash, each in the struggle should respect the other.

# World War I and Its Aftermath

## *The Great Crusade and the Recoil*

The first World War was unique in the history of the United States in the degree to which it unified the churches. Sectional and traditional differences disappeared. The war was regarded as a great crusade both just and holy: just because the violation of Belgium and the sinking of the *Lusitania* called for redress, holy because the aim of the war was not merely to right a wrong but to prepare for the erection of a new order of society in which war should be eliminated and the world made safe for democracy. President Wilson, who launched the crusade, was an earnest idealist reared in the zealous tradition of Calvinism. The churches responded to his lofty appeals.

The Federal Council of Churches pledged "both support and allegiance in unstinted measure. . . . We are grateful that the ends to which we are committed are such as we can approve." They recognized the sincere conviction of those Christians who "believe that it is forbidden the disciple of Christ to engage in war under any circumstances. Most of us believe that the love of all men which Christ enjoins demands that we defend with all the power given us the sacred rights of humanity. . . . We enter the war without hate or passion, not for private or national gain, with no hatred or bitterness against those with whom we contend." (*Christian Advocate* XCII, 20, May 17, 1917, p. 491.)

This attitude did not long endure nor generally prevail. Many outstanding clergymen and laymen were impatient of restraint toward enemies execrated as inhuman monsters. The pulpits resounded with fulminations against "the Huns." A secular historian felt justified in taking for his survey of this period the title, *The Great Crusade and After, 1914-28*. (William Preston Slosson, N. Y., 1931.)

The recoil after the war from the crusading mood was intense. Many Christian ministers and laymen had seen actual combat and revolted against clothing with the language of piety the inhumanities which war in practice never avoids. The sole

responsibility of Germany for the inauguration of the conflict was called into question by historical investigators who assigned a portion of the blame for the outbreak of hostilities to Russia and to France, and, for the long-standing rivalry issuing in war, to Britain. Evidence also was offered pointing to the conclusion that an international ring of munition makers had had a hand in fomenting and prolonging the war. The stories of the most shocking atrocities attributed to the Germans proved to have been fabricated by propagandists.

The disillusionment with regard to the cause and conduct of the war was augmented by that which followed upon the failure to realize in the peace the ideal objectives for the sake of which the war had been waged. The war to end war was followed by the invasion of Manchuria and Abyssinia. The campaign to make the world safe for democracy had as its sequel in some lands a rise of totalitarianism. The slogan of "No annexations and no indemnities" was evaded by mandates and reparations. The attempt to recover "normalcy" was thwarted by economic upheaval, depression, inflation, widespread unemployment, and more or less violent social upheavals.

For all of these failures war itself was widely blamed on the ground that peoples frenzied with fury cannot immediately on the cessation of hostilities display the magnanimity, rationality and cooperativeness needful for the establishment of world order, democratic institutions, social and economic stability.

Many of the leading literary and ecclesiastical figures of Britain and the United States became pacifist. The books which expressed their views continued to appear well up to the outbreak of the second World War. Vera Brittain lamented the squandering of youth.<sup>13</sup> A. A. Milne stressed the utter stupidity of war which may be compared to the use of a bomb which will indeed destroy an intruder in a garden but will wreck the garden at the same time.<sup>14</sup> Aldous Huxley stressed the intimate

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13. *The Testament of Youth*, 1933.

14. *Peace with Honor*, 1934.

connection of ends and means so that violence cannot be used as an instrument for the elimination of violence.<sup>15</sup> Canon Raven<sup>16</sup> and "Dick" Shepherd rallied the new England to renounce war. In the United States Archibald MacLeish depicted the horror of warfare from the clouds.<sup>17</sup> Harry Emerson Fosdick voiced the conviction of many ministers when he put himself on record as resolved never again to bless war.<sup>18</sup>

### ***The Peace Crusade***

The churches resolved to make every effort to see that there should never be another war to bless. With characteristic ardor the churches of the United States embarked on a crusade for peace. Three ways were tried for the elimination of war. The first looked to the State to outlaw war, the second looked to the Church to excommunicate war, the third looked to the community to find a substitute for war.

#### **A. Outlawry of War**

The first demanded that war be branded as an international crime and outlawed by treaties between sovereign states. The proposal to outlaw war when first broached by Briand in 1927 was hailed as a forward step, and the signing of the Paris Pact in 1929 by 59 nations augured for most churches the ushering in of permanent peace. Repeated resolutions of Methodists and Baptists North and South, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Congregationalists, Disciples and Christians, Latter Day Saints, Universalists, Unitarians, Reformed and Evangelical churches swelled the paean. Historic "peace" churches like the Friends, the Moravians and the Church of the Brethren were pleased to see governments moving toward the conversion of swords into ploughshares. The churches reenforced their resolutions by encouraging their members to decline to serve in outlawed wars.

15. *Ends and Means*, 1937.

16. *Is War Obsolete?* 1934, and *War and the Christian*, 1938.

17. *Air Raid*, 1938.

18. *The Christian Century* (hereinafter cited as *C.C.*), LVIII,4, Jan. 22, 1941, pp. 115-118, cf. *A Christian Conscience and War*, 1925.

But whether all wars were outlawed or only some wars was not altogether clear. "The renunciation of war as an instrument of national policy," opened the door for the distinction between offensive and defensive wars, and several churches specifically exempted the defensive war from the ban. The Northern Baptists and the Southern Methodists, the Christian and the Presbyterian churches were the most careful in guarding themselves at this point. In 1934, five years after the Pact was signed, the Presbyterian General Assembly proposed to circulate among its members the following pledge: "I will not cross the borders of any nation except in friendship, nor will I support my country in such action." The Northern Baptists in the same year proposed this pledge: "Reserving the right of national self-defense by such means as may seem to me wise, effective and Christian, I, from now on, definitely repudiate all aggressive war. I will cross no national boundary line to kill and destroy, nor will I support my government in sending its army and navy to do so." The Southern Methodists both in 1930 and in 1934 added the defense of ideals to that of territory as legitimate ground for waging war. The Christian is obligated, they said, "to oppose by all proper and legal methods the resort to force for the alleged settlement of international controversies, except only in defense of those national ideals for the preservation of which the Republic was organized."

The distinction between offensive and defensive war was extended to weapons. The armaments of aggression were to be outlawed: economic and bacteriological warfare, tanks, mobile guns and bombing planes—so spoke the Unitarians and Universalists in 1931, the Northern Baptists and Seventh Day Adventists in 1932, and the Methodists in 1934.

## B. The Excommunication and Renunciation of War

A second line of attack was religious and moral rather than political. It concerned directly the actions of churches and their members rather than the actions of national governments. Several churches put on record their unwillingness *as churches* to

bless any war whatever. The Reformed Church in 1926 declared: "The Church of Christ as an institution should not be used as an instrument or an agency in support of war." The Presbyterian General Assembly in 1931 asserted: "The Church should never again bless a war." The Evangelical Synod of North America in 1929 committed itself "to the fundamental proposition that to support war is to deny the Gospel we profess to believe." The Southern Methodists in 1926 affirmed: "We must loathe war and hate war, and strip it of all its falseness and glamour and let it stand forth in its unveiled hideousness." The Methodist Ecumenical Conference in 1931 said that, "the business of the Church is to put the war business out of business." The General Conference in 1936 affirmed: "War as we now know it is utterly destructive. It is the greatest social sin of modern times; a denial of the ideals of Christ; a violation of human personality; and a threat to civilization. Therefore, we declare that the Methodist Episcopal Church as an institution does not endorse, support, or purpose to participate in war." With but slight alteration this statement was reiterated by the General Conference in the spring of 1940. Said the Congregational General Council in 1934, "We of this Council are convinced that we must now make this declaration: 'The Church is through with war!' We of this Council call upon the people of our churches to renounce war and all its works and ways, and to refuse to support, sanction or bless it."

The resolutions of church bodies were, of course, not intended to bind individuals, but the point was made plain by many that the Church as an institution would give its moral support alike to those of its members who might feel it their duty to serve in the armed forces if war should come again and to those who might elect the way of the conscientious objector. The Methodists, Episcopalians, Presbyterians and Congregationalists invited the conscientious objectors among their young men to register in advance their convictions with their churches as an aid to later clarification with the government. The Presbyterians in 1931, the Northern Baptist Convention and the

Episcopalians in 1934, and the Methodists and Unitarians in 1936 voted to ask of the government the same consideration for their conscientious objectors as that accorded to members of the Society of Friends. The decision of the Supreme Court which denied citizenship to Professor Macintosh, because of his unwillingness to promise in advance to support any war in which the government might engage, called forth sharp criticism from the Northern Baptist, Methodist, Christian, Disciples, Presbyterian, Episcopal, and Unitarian churches and evoked resolutions urging that an alien conscientious objector should not be ineligible for citizenship.

Some of the churches by tradition habituated to the theory of the just war came out with similar condemnations of war but on different grounds. Their distinction was not between the defensive and the offensive, but between the modern and earlier wars. The contention was that former wars might have been compatible with the formula of the just war, but that modern war, embracing entire populations and conducted with weapons of indiscriminate deadliness, is utterly incompatible. Among Catholics this view was defended in 1928 by Franziskas Stratmann in his book, *The Church and War*. War as we know it, he declared, cannot be squared with scholastic teaching on the subject. "The old teaching of St. Augustine, and the Thomists, supported by Suarez and Bellarmin, may seem strangely out of place in the world of today, fit only for the cloister from which it came—so much the worse for the world!" One by one he examined the conditions of the just war to see whether they are realizable under modern conditions. Sole guilt? If the long antecedents of war are taken into account this is scarcely to be discovered. Exemption of noncombatants? Poison gas is not discriminating. A reasonable chance of success in vindicating justice? When one considers the millions of the innocent who are engulfed in the punishment of the guilty, the end appears highly difficult of attainment.

A similar position was taken in 1933 by John K. Ryan in *Modern War and Basic Ethics*, and by Cyprian Emanuel in *The*

*Ethics of War* (Catholic Ass. for International Peace, No. 9, 1932). The latter concludes:

It is becoming ever more difficult to find all the conditions [of the just war] verified simultaneously in any given case. And in few, if any, modern wars have they been observed; nor has even an honest attempt to observe them been made by the nations that initiated hostilities. It is particularly the growing brutality of modern warfare and the comparative ease with which unbiased arbitration can be had in practically all instances that render the justification of war so difficult at the present time.

In like fashion Emil Brunner, of the Reformed Church in Switzerland, condemned modern warfare while dissociating himself from pacifists whose position would deprive the state of the right of self-defense and would thus imperil its existence. Historical wars can be defended on the basis of the Christian ethic. The Machiavelli of the future will not recommend the use of war which entails the annihilation of civilization.<sup>19</sup>

In the United States, however, the Protestant churches of the just war tradition held with greater fidelity to their inherited positions. Particularly instructive was a poll conducted in 1934 by Kirby Page and reported in *The World Tomorrow* (XVII, 10, May 10, 1934). Replies were received from 20,870 clergymen. Among the questions addressed to them four are especially pertinent to our inquiry: (1) Do you believe that the churches of America should now go on record as refusing to sanction or support any future war? (2) Are you personally prepared to state that it is your present purpose not to sanction any future war or participate as an armed combatant? (3) Could you conscientiously serve as an official army chaplain on active duty in wartime? (4) Do you favor the immediate entrance of the United States into the League of Nations? The results given below are tabulated according to denominations and listed in the order of the percentages of affirmative responses to question No. 1.

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19. *Das Gebot und die Ordnungen*, 1932.

	Question 1 % of Replies in Affirmative	Question 2 % of Replies in Affirmative	Question 3 % of Replies in Negative	Question 4 % of Replies in Affirmative
Church of the Brethren	96	95	76	44
Evangelical	84	75	47	30
Methodist Episcopal	78	72	45	58
Disciples of Christ	72	69	47	52
Reformed	68	63	40	41
United Brethren	68	64	39	38
Congregational	66	63	44	55
Unitarian, Universalist	63	60	45	65
Baptist	62	57	31	43
Presbyterian	57	51	30	50
Protestant Episcopal	50	46	23	52
Lutheran	38	33	14	17

An historic peace church is naturally at the top of the column. The churches of the just war tradition, the Lutheran and the Episcopalian, are on the bottom of the list. Next to them comes the Presbyterian with its background of just war and crusade. The churches of sectarian Protestantism, with ingredients both of Calvinism and of Anabaptism, are prominent in the peace crusade.

### C. Alternatives to War

A third line of attack was an effort to discover alternate techniques to war which could be employed by the community for the settlement of disputes between nations. One technique was the erection of an international machinery of justice comparable to that already existing within the framework of well ordered states. The World Court and the League of Nations received warm support from many churches in the hope that they would achieve this end. The answers to question four on the above questionnaire record the mind of representatives of the churches on that point.

Another alternative to war which commended itself especially to Christian pacifists was the attempt to resolve conflicts by the exercise of non-violent pressure. The example and the comparative success of Gandhi in the interval between the two world wars gave a very strong stimulus to the exploration of the

power of non-violence. Three books appeared on this subject in the United States: one in 1923 by Clarence Case, *Non-Violent Coercion*, one in 1934 by Richard Gregg, *The Power of Non-Violence*, and one in 1940 by A. J. Muste, *Non-Violence in an Aggressive World*. These works collected incidents from the past in which non-cooperation with evil and patient suffering under tyranny had overcome aggression and proved in the end the most effective defense. Present situations likewise were analyzed. A. J. Muste, for example, examined the dilemma of the Spanish Loyalist government confronted by Franco. Muste's conclusion was that the government on coming into power ought at once to have addressed itself to the removal of causes of disaffection. The grievances of the peasants should have been redressed, the army should have been recalled from Morocco and drastically reorganized at home, and the Church should not have been alienated. If all these things had been done and Franco had still been able to muster sufficient support for successful resistance, the Loyalist government should have stepped out rather than plunge the country into a civil war.

### *The Assault on Liberal Optimism*

Beneath all of these programs for the restraint of war, whether through outlawry, excommunication, conscientious objection, or non-cooperation, lay a residuum of optimism from the liberal era. The assumption was that war can rather readily be eliminated. Such confidence received a succession of shattering blows. Karl Barth in Europe revived the Calvinist picture of human depravity, and Hitler arose to illustrate it. The year before the Nazi accession to power in 1933, Reinhold Niebuhr in the United States struck at naive optimism by reviving in *Moral Man and Immoral Society* (1932) the essential features of Luther's tract *On Civil Government* with all too devastating documentation from recent events. Luther had drawn a distinction between the little flock of real Christians and the mass of nominal Christians. The one could dispense with control, the other must be ruled by the sword. The masses would never be genuinely Christian, hence the sword could never be eliminated.

Niebuhr's distinction was not quite the same. He did not segregate persons into true and nominal Christians. His point was rather that the very best of Christians act differently as private individuals and as members of large groups. But this too was basically Luther's attitude. For him the home took the place of the monastery and in the domestic circle the Sermon on the Mount received an exemplification impossible in society at large. The moral in both cases was that in public relations conflict will never be overcome. Consequently restraint will always be necessary. The only question is as to how much restraint and how it should be exercised. Here Niebuhr was scornful of the outlawry of war and much more respectful of Gandhi's non-cooperation, but insistent that non-cooperation is not non-resistance. It may have definite moral advantages because it can be more readily controlled, does not so easily alienate the one against whom it is directed, and leaves the door open for a rational agreement. It may succeed under some circumstances though not under others, and it does not preclude recourse to violent action if the non-violent should fail. The conclusion was that war should not be ruled out as an ultimate recourse.

## The Churches and World War II

Then came Hitler's accession to power and the chain of events leading up to Munich and the second World War. The British people were called upon for a quick decision. Some declared for war because the national existence of Britain and the empire was threatened, others, for the sake of the minorities of Europe and the decencies of life. British pacifists were driven to a re-examination of their position, and not a few changed their minds. A. A. Milne in a pamphlet entitled *War With Honor* said there was just one word to be written over every page of his earlier *Peace With Honor* and that word was "Hitler". Bertrand Russell, though never a pacifist, had objected to the war in 1918 as a conflict of rival imperialisms. He felt differently about the second World War because, frightful as is modern war "conquest by Hitler has in many countries proved even

worse." (*N. Y. Times*, Jan. 23, 1941, and Jan. 27, 1941.) Maude Royden affirmed that a tyranny more terrible than the world had ever seen must be resisted: Britain had neither the spiritual strength nor the discipline to resist in any other way than by arms, therefore Britain must fight. Miss Royden quoted the word of a man who said, "I used to be a pacifist. I know now that I would rather go to hell for fighting than have my son brought up to think that it was funny to kick a Jew in the stomach." (C.C., LVIII, 16, April 16, 1941, p. 523.)

Canada joined with Britain in the struggle. The United States, spared by her geographic location and political independence from immediate decision, watched and waited, trying to decide where her interest and her duty lay. The Government of the United States moved stage by stage toward intervention in Europe and in the East. The neutrality legislation was repealed so that the opponents of the Axis could buy munitions on a cash and carry basis. Supplementary lend-lease was subsequently introduced. Economic pressure on Japan commenced with the freezing of Japanese assets in the United States as early as July 25, 1941. Trade restrictions were progressively applied until Dec. 2, 1941, five days before Pearl Harbor, the *New York Times* (p. 6) cited the report of the National Industrial Conference Board that "Japan has been cut off from about 75 per cent of her normal imports as a result of the Allied blockade." Before hostilities were declared we were already so nearly embarked on an undeclared war that the *Saturday Evening Post* on May 24, 1941, revised its non-interventionist editorial policy without retracting a single argument in its favor on the sole ground that the country was by this time too involved for retreat. "For the truth is that the only way now to avoid the shooting, if it has not already begun, is to repudiate the government."

### *The Poll of the Country*

Public opinion was torn between sympathy with Great Britain and the desire to stay out of the war. A Gallup poll,

in February, 1941, registered 85% in favor of staying out of the war, and 68% in favor of aiding Great Britain even though war should be the outcome. (*N. Y. Times*, Feb. 8, 1941.) The strongest war feeling was in the Southeast. Elsewhere such slogans were to be heard as: "Keep America out of War," "No A.E.F.," and "The Yanks are not Coming." The objection to participation came from several sources. The Communists supported non-intervention in view of the German-Russian pact. Many isolationists were concerned primarily for American interests and believed that given the desire we should be able to maintain our territorial integrity and our commercial supremacy without participation. Some liberals thought we could best serve both the world and ourselves by affording an example of the successful operation of political democracy and regulated capitalism, and this we could do only if we remained at peace. Moreover, by preserving an island of sanity and prosperity we should be in a better position to mediate a reasonable peace and aid in world reconstruction. Pressure for intervention came from those business interests which feared the commercial rivalry of a victorious Germany, from the White House which was better informed than the country as to the extent of Nazi pretensions and machinations, and from a group of intellectuals who saw no hope for freedom save in the military defeat of the totalitarian powers.

### *The Poll of the Churches*

Opinion in the churches was not far different from that in the country at large. The prevailing sentiment was in favor of staying out of the war. Old World connections may still have played a part, conscious or unconscious, in determining alliances since the most pronounced non-interventionists were the Roman Catholics, whose Irish contingent might readily feel that the United States should imitate Eire; and the Lutherans, historically linked with Germany. The most ardent interventionists were from among the leaders of the Episcopal and Presbyterian churches, connected historically with England and Scot-

land. American sectionalism may conceivably have influenced the Disciples of Christ of the Middle West to favor continued neutrality, and the Southern Baptists to sponsor intervention. But if these considerations played a part they were certainly never avowed. Each church took its stand on the interpretation of the world situation in the light of the Christian ethic.

Catholic opinion in circles both academic and non-academic was polled in November, 1939, by the Jesuit journal *America*. (Nov. 11 and 18, 1939, pp. 116-119 and 145-147.) One poll canvassed the opinion of students in 182 institutions of higher learning. Ninety per cent responded, a total of more than 54,000. Forty-five per cent believed that the United States would be drawn into the war. Only 2% favored our entry, 97% were opposed, 1% doubtful. Seventy-nine per cent believed that American intervention on the side of the Allies would not lead to the creation of a stable peace in Europe, 7% took the opposing view, 14% were doubtful. In case an army were sent to Europe, 12,825 (25%) said they would volunteer, 22,348 (40%) said they would serve if conscripted, while 19,317 (35%) said that they would be conscientious objectors. A poll among the readers of the journal revealed opinion equally divided as to whether we should come to be involved. Ninety-four and eight-tenths per cent were opposed to our entry. Only 4% believed that our intervention would help toward a stable peace. Fifty-eight and six-tenths per cent of the men of fighting age declared themselves conscientious objectors, and 66.2% of the women and older men would give them support.

Pronouncements by Lutheran bodies, if representative, reveal a surprising tendency to depart from the customary endorsement of the just war at the very moment when other churches were moving toward it. The National Lutheran Council in October, 1939, declared that American neutrality should be based not on self-interest and nationalistic sympathies and prejudices, an impossible isolation or a desire for economic gain, "but rather because we have witnessed the utter futility and degradation of war, because war is power politics to the nth de-

gree, because war breeds dissatisfaction and hatreds which bring new and ever more terrible conflicts." (C.C., LVI, 44, Nov. 1, 1939, p. 1350.) The Long Island Conference of the United Lutherans in May, 1941, stated that "war as an instrument of national policy settles no issues in the moral realm, is futile in the political, and in the religious a denial of God and of the life and teaching of his Son. . . . that the time has come when arbitrament by war must be abolished." (C.C., LVIII, 20, May 14, 1941, p. 663.)

A poll of Episcopal clergymen by the *Living Church* in July, 1941, brought responses from 3,076. (CIII, 22, July 9, 1941, p. 6.) Their answers are tabulated as follows:

1. "Do you favor immediate American entry into the war on the side of Britain?" Yes, 1,084 — No, 1,900.
2. If your answer above was No, would you favor entry into the war if, in the opinion of the President and Congress, our participation would be necessary to prevent a German victory?" Yes, 1,504 — No, 396.
3. "Are you a pacifist?" Yes, 293 — No, 2,691.

The Presbyterians suffered from divided counsels, with a steady movement toward support of the war. Churches with large minorities had the choice of making joint pronouncements at the price of more or less open inconsistency or of making separate statements. The General Assembly of May, 1941, chose the former. All were agreed on the sentence: "We humbly confess that our own nation shares in the guilt that has occasioned the present world conflict." The next two sentences were inserted by the interventionists. "We believe that it is the duty of a Church which worships a God of justice to recognize a moral distinction between enslaving dictatorships which invade the lands of others, and those peoples which are valiantly defending their liberties and spiritual heritages. We further believe that our country should sustain such peoples to the utmost in their brave struggle." The next sentences were drafted by the non-interventionists: "But the General Assembly records its conviction that much more is still to be gained by America remain-

ing free from military participation in the present conflict, not in any spirit of selfish isolationism, nor of moral irresponsibility, but with a clear view of joining with other nations in constructive efforts toward a lasting peace."

The general factors making for isolationism in the Middle West may possibly have had a bearing on the attitude of the Disciples who almost deserted the meeting of their convention in St. Louis in May, 1941, in order to listen to an address by Charles A. Lindbergh. (C.C., LVIII, 20, May 14, 1941, p. 667.) By a two to one vote the convention resolved to adjure the President to honor his solemn promise to keep the country out of war. "We implore the President to revive the role of mediator for himself and our nation and to adopt no further policy in aid to Britain which will carry the hazard of involvement in the war. The American people are overwhelmingly opposed to belligerent participation, and we look with grave foreboding upon any action by the government which will plunge a divided nation into war." (C.C., LVIII, 21, May 21, 1941, p. 694.)

The war sentiment revealed by the Gallup poll in the Southeast was matched by the resolution of the Southern Baptists in 1941 in favor of all aid to Britain short of war. (C.C., LVIII, 23, June 4, 1941, p. 760.)

The Methodists and Congregationalists still reflected the strong wave of pacifist sentiment which had swept over the churches in the revulsion against the first World War. No sectional differences are discernible within these bodies. The New York East Methodist Conference said in May, 1940, "We call on the ministers and people of our churches to keep cool in a fevered time in the firm belief that an America which keeps out of war can in the long run best rid the world of war and promote a just and lasting peace." (C.C., LVII, 23, June 5, 1940, p. 745.) The 800 delegates of the National Council of Methodist Youth on August 30, 1940, were reported to be delirious with delight over a false rumor of the defeat of conscription. (C.C., LVII, 37, Sept. 11, 1940, p. 1124.) The Southern Cali-

fornia and Arizona Methodists in July, 1941, opposed intervention (C.C., LVIII, 29, July 16, 1941, p. 917) and the Ohio Methodists urged the Church to "insist that peace be made at the earliest possible time." (C.C., LVIII, 30, July 23, 1941, p. 938.)

The National Council of the Congregational Christian Churches in 1940 found in the wars then raging a confirmation of the judgment passed on all war at Oxford in 1937, that "it is 'a demonstration of the power of sin in this world, and a defiance of the righteousness of God. . . . War involves compulsory enmity, diabolical outrage against human personality and a wanton distortion of the truth.' Our churches today do not equivocate nor retreat in any respect from that searching judgment." The New York State Congregational Christian Conference in May, 1941, urged the government to redeem the pledge to keep the country out of war. (C.C., LVIII, 23, June 4, 1941, p. 758.)

### *The Debate in the Churches*

The reasons adduced by the churches in support of non-intervention naturally coincided in some measure with those employed in secular quarters, except that no Christian was an isolationist in the sense of being concerned only for the welfare of the United States. The main line of cleavage in the thinking of the Christian non-interventionists had to do with ends and means. Some held that the war did not present sufficiently clear issues to warrant intervention. Others believed the issues to be clear but felt that war was an ineffective instrument for their resolution. Again, for some the one consideration reinforced the other.

The critics in the first group continued to interpret the war as a conflict of rival imperialisms. They pointed to the failings of Great Britain in India and Burma and to our own very questionable role in the Far East. Germany and Italy in the eyes of these critics were guilty of greater unscrupulousness chiefly

because they were fighting to overturn the status quo. Poland was portrayed as a sorry lamb to rescue from the fangs of the wolf, since Poland herself had played the wolf in the partitioning of Czechoslovakia and in the years between the two wars had come to be ruled by a government quite as autocratic as Hitler's. John Haynes Holmes voiced the conviction of this group when he described the war as

... only the latest of a long series of European conflicts rooted in the age-old struggle for military predominance and imperialistic rule. . . . To me Hitler is all that is horrible, but as such he is the product of our world. . . . He did not begin the persecution of the Jews which has been a Christian practice for well-nigh two millennia. . . . He did not inaugurate the concentration camp, which the Spaniards imposed upon the Cubans, the English upon the Boers, and the Americans upon the Filipinos. He did not initiate the totalitarian state, which is only an extremity of tyranny as transmitted to our time by the Hapsburgs and the Romanovs. He did not invent the idea of the subjection of helpless peoples, as witness Britain in India, France in Morocco, and Belgium in the Congo. . . . He is the perversion of our lusts, the poisoned distillation of our crimes. (C.C., LVII, 50, Dec. 11, 1940, p. 1546.)

The victors in the first World War, including the United States, were held largely responsible for the rise of totalitarianism in Italy and Germany. All the shortcomings of Versailles and its aftermath were recalled: the sole guilt accusation, the exorbitant and indefinite reparations, the continuation of the blockade after the armistice and the sabotage of democratic government in Germany. The remark of Stresemann was recalled, "If only you had made one concession I could have kept the German people for peace. That you did not is my tragedy and your crime." (C.C., LVII, 29, July 17, 1940, p. 900.) The Allies failed to fulfill their thrice-made promise to reduce armaments. The last conference to that end failed in 1932. Hitler took over in 1933. The Allies by their intransigence had gone far to make him, and now were not in a position of sufficient moral vantage to act as the vindicators of justice.

Other opponents of military intervention rejected the interpretation of the war as merely a clash of rival imperialisms.

Some of them agreed with the interventionists that the conflict was in significant part between democracy and totalitarianism, between a Christian and a neo-pagan culture. But they objected to war as an instrument. Most that was said on the subject came not from the traditional peace churches, perhaps because their opposition to war was too well known for reiteration, perhaps because their constituencies were already divided. The pacifists in the ranks of Protestant liberalism, many of them converts in the era of revulsion after the first World War, were the most vocal, and the considerations which they adduced were chiefly pragmatic: that Satan cannot cast out Satan, that war cannot end war, that totalitarianism cannot be overcome with tanks, nor democracy defended with bombing planes. The futility of war was the main plea. The interventionists who hoped through war to destroy totalitarianism and establish a just and durable peace were described as the most romantic of optimists if they could suppose that "after a long-drawn-out orgy of indiscriminate killing . . . people may be expected to think rationally and act justly." (Ernest Fremont Tittle in *C.C.*, LVIII, 6, Feb. 5, 1941, p. 179.)

Instead of deciding for military intervention, these men held the United Nations should be encouraged to state their terms and present them to Hitler, or to go over his head to the German people. To the charge that this would be more appeasement and another Munich, the reply was that Munich was not appeasement—Munich was selling Czechoslovakia down the river. Real appeasement would have required an offer to repudiate Versailles, abandon imperialism and reorganize Europe in such fashion as to satisfy the legitimate aspirations of dispossessed nations through a new international structure. In the East, Japan should not be goaded into war even by an embargo on the materials of war. Rather, the United States should relinquish her stake in the Orient and seek to work out a solution for the problems of China and Japan alike. The announcement of such a program would probably bring peace at once. If it did not and if the United States should be invaded, the aggressor should by all means be resisted. Those who were spir-

itually prepared only for armed resistance would have to resist by arms. Pacifists would resist by refusing to cooperate with the enemy should he invade the country and would endure the cross in the belief that patient suffering would in time outwear tyranny.<sup>20</sup>

This entire analysis was most stoutly opposed by a group who urged at first all aid to Britain short of war and in time came to favor even military intervention. They rejected the characterization of the war as merely a struggle between rival imperialisms. To speak in such terms was to strain out the British gnat and swallow the German camel. Granted that all are tainted with sin, that all stand in need of repentance, nevertheless there are still relative rights and relative wrongs and to distinguish between them is of extreme importance. To be sure, the war may not establish democracy, liberty, and a just and enduring peace. The only thing the war can do is to restrain outrageous villainy and give a chance to build again. A victory of the United Nations will insure none of the ideal ends which Christians entertain, but a victory for the Axis precludes them. And, an Axis victory can be prevented only by military strength. To suppose that the patient endurance of evil will soften the heart of the wolf is sheer nonsense. To talk of influencing history by bearing the cross is to forget that the crucified is blotted out of the historical process. If a pacifist wishes to take his stand upon an absolute, regardless of consequences, he is on logically impregnable ground, but let him not pretend by his stand to determine the course of events, and above all let him not prate of the cross when by his very abstention from the struggle he is not so much bearing the cross as fastening it upon the shoulders of others. (Articles in *Christianity and Crisis* [hereinafter cited as *C.Cr.*], and Reinhold Niebuhr, *Christianity and Power Politics*, 1940.)

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20. Articles in the *Christian Century* on the question "If America enters the War —what shall I do?" Day, Dec. 25, 1940, Palmer, Jan. 8, 1941, Fosdick, Jan. 22, 1941, Tittle, Feb. 5, 1941. Opposing views in favor of supporting the country in war were voiced by Bennett, Dec. 4, 1940, Reinhold Niebuhr, Dec. 18, 1940, Taft, Jan. 1, 1941, McConnell, Jan. 15, 1941, Van Dusen, Jan. 29, 1941.

No better statement of this position was offered than in a manifesto issued by thirty-two prominent Christian leaders in January, 1940. They declared that they were prompted to speak in order to express their

... dissent from a position advanced by many who are regarded as spokesmen for the churches, which seems to us to be due to intellectual confusion and to tend toward moral callousness and national self-righteousness and irresponsibility. That position is that, since all war is unChristian, Christians in neutral nations should not discriminate between belligerents. . . . It ignores the reality of relative but important distinctions between the contending parties.

In contrast we offer the following interpretation:

1. For the ultimate causes of the conflicts in both Europe and Asia all nations, including our own, must share responsibility.
2. This admission of common guilt as regards the origins of the present wars must not blind us to the incalculable issues at stake in the outcome of these wars. A distinction must always be made between moral accountability for conditions leading to war and moral obligation to deal with those conditions and their threatening consequences. In the present conflicts all nations are moved largely by national self-interest. But the fact that all are involved in a sinful situation, and that human justice is never perfect or human motives wholly pure, cannot excuse Christians from seeking such justice as is attainable. Discriminate moral judgments are of the essence of the Christian's task in life.

More particularly, an interpretation of the present conflicts as merely a clash of rival imperialisms can spring only from ignorance or moral confusion. The basic distinction between civilizations in which justice and freedom are still realities and those in which they have been displaced by ruthless tyranny cannot be ignored. To equate what the soviet republics are doing in Finland and what the Finns are doing to defend their liberties is to deny all ethical discriminations for the sake of a purely abstract perfection. To suggest that nothing of consequence is at stake in the success of Japanese, German and Russian designs on China, Czechoslovakia, Poland and the Baltic states, or in the successful resistance of these latter nations, is to be guilty of moral irresponsibility. A victory for the Allied powers or for China would not of itself assure the establishment of justice and peace, but the victory of Germany, Russia or Japan would inevitably preclude the justice, freedom of thought and worship, and international cooperation which are

fundamental to a Christian world order. Therefore, Christians in neutral countries cannot evade the ethical issues involved and the consequent claim upon their sympathy and support." (C.C., LVII, 5, Jan. 31, 1940, p. 152.)

### *Pearl Harbor: The Recession of Pacifism*

All such discussion was cut short by Pearl Harbor. As usual in war pacifism receded. The recession was far from complete. Three thousand ministers in the United States enrolled in the Fellowship of Reconciliation have continued their pacifist witness, and the membership of the society has increased both in Britain and in the United States since the outbreak of hostilities. The British Fellowship advanced from 9,813 members in 1939 to 12,669 in March, 1943. In the United States membership increased from 9,600 in 1940 to 14,500 in December, 1943. Every denomination has some conscientious objectors. Nevertheless there is a marked discrepancy between the opposition of 91.5% of the Roman Catholic clergy to a shooting war in 1941 and the declaration of 100 bishops and archbishops in November, 1942: "At times it is the positive duty of a nation to wage war in the defense of life and right. Our country now finds itself in such circumstances." (C.C., LIX, 47, Nov. 25, 1942, p. 1468.) There is again a decided contrast between the 19,317 Roman Catholic students who in November, 1939, declared that in case of war they would be objectors and the scant 87 Catholics in Civilian Public Service on July 1, 1944 (*The Reporter*, Sept. 15, 1944). This is not to say that the others have abandoned their principles. No Roman Catholic can be a pacifist on principle because the Church is committed to the ethic of the just war. The only question is whether a particular war is just or unjust. In 1939 the only war on the horizon for the United States appeared to be one of intervention which could scarcely be interpreted otherwise than as aggression, whereas the war of December, 1941, appeared as a defense of American territory. The only Roman Catholics thereafter who could hold aloof were those for whom all modern war is incompatible with the scholastic ethic.

The Methodists could more readily be regarded as shifting ground. The statement of the Council of Bishops on January 22 after Pearl Harbor still held that war is "economically destructive, socially devastating, politically futile and spiritually repugnant," but "in view of the issues involved there is no inconsistency for individual Christians to give whole-hearted devotion to the immediate task and at the same time strive to keep the Church, as a Church, free from official participation in war." (C.C., LIX, 5, Feb. 4, 1942, p. 158.) A year later the distinction between individuals and the Church had vanished. The Council of Bishops declared:

We are under no illusion regarding the unChristlike character of war as a method of settling international disputes, nor do we forget our own shortcomings and sins relative to the conditions that produced this struggle. But we are in the midst of it now because there has arisen in the world a pagan philosophy driven by un-Christian motives and bent upon establishing its will upon mankind. Against this ideology and its supporters the United Nations have set themselves with grim determination. We pledge ourselves to the destruction of this brutal and unwarranted aggression and to the preservation for all mankind of the sacred liberties of free peoples. (C.C., LX, 1, Jan. 6, 1943, p. 31.)

The General Conference in the spring of 1944 was divided, the clergy almost equally and the laity with a sizable minority opposed to support of the war. The Conference preferred united resolutions with discordant expressions to separate resolutions by the majority and the minority. The statement containing the following statement was passed by a lay vote of 203 to 131 and a clerical vote of 170 to 169:

God himself has a stake in the struggle. . . . In Christ's name we ask for the blessing of God upon the men in the armed forces, and we pray for victory. . . . We are well within the Christian position when we assert the necessity of the use of military force to resist an aggression which would overthrow every right which is held sacred by civilized men.

The session immediately following passed a resolution which read in part:

Christianity cannot be nationalistic; it must be universal in outlook and appeal. War makes its appeal to force and hate; Chris-

tianity to reason and love. The influence of the church must therefore always be on the side of every effort seeking to remove animosities and prejudices which are contrary to the spirit and teachings of Christ. It does not satisfy the Christian conscience to be told that war is inevitable. The methods of Jesus and the methods of war belong to different worlds. (C.C., LXI, 25, June 21, 1944, p. 743.)

The Presbyterians in May, 1942 came out with an unequivocal statement renouncing militarism as a policy of state but believing "nevertheless that we have no alternative as a nation but to engage in this war. The Assembly pledges itself to pray for and work for a righteous victory and enduring peace."

The Disciples of Christ who had flocked after Lindbergh the year before now resolved:

As we assemble in this Convention, we are forcibly reminded that a great part of the world is engulfed in a war of such magnitude and far-reaching possibilities as to threaten the existence of religion and democracy. With the initiation of this war, we, as Christians and Americans, had no part. With its conclusion we are vitally interested and affected. The issue is plain: it is *Mein Kampf* versus the *Bible*—Christianity or heathen tribalism. (July, 1942.)

The Congregational-Christian churches finding themselves in June, 1942, not of one mind elected to present a divided report. Out of the 544 delegates voting, 409 favored the following statement:

Many of us, in obedience to Christian conscience, support the present war effort of our country at whatever sacrifice of life and treasure. They do this because the aggressions of the Axis Powers are so unspeakable, cruel and ruthless, and their ideologies so destructive of those freedoms we hold dear. They take their stand on the conviction that the defeat of the Axis Powers is a preliminary necessity to a just and durable peace, and to the unfettered continuance of the world mission of the Church.

One hundred and thirty-five favored the following statement:

Others of us, convinced of the futility of war as a method to achieve the goals which should be sought, feel that they cannot, in loyalty to their Christian consciences, accept the way of violence and bloodshed. They are convinced that reconciliation, intelligent goodwill, Christian love and suffering are the most effective ways of meeting cruelty and wrong. They believe that the way of the

cross requires them to endure suffering, if necessary, but not willingly to inflict it in order to enforce their purposes.

The Northern Baptists in May, 1942, retracted nothing of their former condemnation of war and left participation to the individual consciences of their members.

By and large concerted opposition to the war had folded up. The main reason was that the Japanese attack had solidified the country. Many Americans who had opposed intervention in Europe saw no recourse after Pearl Harbor but to defeat Japan and Hitler too, since he had followed suit. The Axis Powers certainly did their best to provide for the United Nations all the normal conditions of the just war. Many former pacifists argued that under the circumstances the best way to further peace was to finish the war.

### **No Crusade**

But if pacifism largely collapsed its place was not taken by a crusade in which the knight may fight without qualm, assured that the cause is holy, that God is with him and Christ beside him, and that victory will be a triumph of the cross. Such a mood has recurred but slightly this time and chiefly in secular quarters. The editors of *Fortune* were able to write that the second World War appeared at first to America's neutral eyes

... like a war between rival imperialisms. . . . But Mr. Churchill at once proclaimed the war to be a crusade in defense of Western faith. Last November the British First Army in Africa, having taken the cross as its insigne, reached the very spot where the last Crusade ended seven centuries ago. By then millions of Americans were ready to appreciate this symbolism and to acknowledge that as far as the European war is concerned, Mr. Churchill was right. . . . Great Britain's racist sins and failures of understanding in the East do not disqualify her to be the cross-bearer of Europe. What, then, is the American stake in this European crusade? (*Fortune*, XXVII, 4, Suppl. April 1943, p. 2.)

And General MacArthur, after the fall of Bataan, could say, "To the weeping mothers of its dead, I can only say that the halo of Jesus of Nazareth has descended upon their sons and

that God will take them unto Himself." (C.C., LIX, 16, April 22, 1942, p. 515.)

Among churchmen such language has been rare. Despite the fact that aggression is this time so much more brutal than before, all have been so chastened by previous failures and disillusioned with regard to the human nature even of the saints that no one is now repeating the remark of R. H. Tawney in 1917, "Either war is a crusade or it is a crime; there is no half-way house." The word which is most common today is not "holy" but "grim".<sup>21</sup> This is a war without music. Dressing Jesus in a uniform has not been common. In December, 1939, a correspondent of the *Christian Century* represented him as saying, "Gentlemen, put on me a Finnish uniform." (C.C., LVI, 52, Dec. 27, 1939, p. 1611.) He had to be hurried out of it so rapidly that there has been no disposition to substitute another. Daniel Poling, who has consistently supported American participation in the struggle against the totalitarian powers, has refused to call the war holy. The cause is holy. "Freedom is holy. . . . Is this then a holy war? No. War is not holy. Every hard thing said about war during the peace may in truth be said now. War is the sum of man's inhumanity to man."<sup>22</sup> The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in May, 1942, at first adopted a resolution with a crusading tinge that "the cause for which our nation is at war is just and righteous and that our freedom, our culture and our historic faith are dependent upon the outcome of the present conflict." At a later session this was struck out in favor of the belief "that we have no alternative as a nation but to engage in this war."

John C. Bennett applies the adjective "just" to the war against the Axis powers, but not the term "holy." "Much that is holy, is at stake in this war." We ought "to do all that we can to defeat the Nazi power." But neither of these statements means that this is a holy war. The war cannot be called holy because

21. "American Preaching in War Time," No. I, Federal Council of Churches, *Information Service*, June 6, 1942.

22. *A Preacher Looks at War*, 1943, p. 17.

so much unholiness is mixed with it. The war can be called just despite the mingled injustice, because justice is at a lower level than holiness. Whether in the end this war can be "regarded as just in the light of its results may depend in large part upon the refusal of Christians to call it a holy war now," since those who fight a holy war are so imbued with righteous hate that they cannot make a stable peace.<sup>23</sup>

The note of contrition runs through practically every church pronouncement. A lone crusader like Stanley High was somewhat irritated that "prayers for us in wartime fairly reek with" penitence, and the sons of God are being sent forth to war clad only in sackcloth. (*C.Cr.*, Sept. 21, 1942, p. 6.) And Paul Ramsay reminded the mournful warrior that he had better not "blubber over his gun-powder" but get on with the shooting. (*C.Cr.*, April 19, 1943, p. 4.) Such exhortations only reinforce the observation of Willard Sperry that "we cannot recover either for better or for worse the feelings of World War I for the needs of World War II." We are no longer wielding "the sword of the Lord and Gideon." The English, he said, at the outbreak of the war thought of themselves sometimes as a patient about to undergo a dangerous operation and sometimes as the doctor who, by a slip of the scalpel "might infect himself with the poison in the bloodstream of the patient." Either way the mood was sober, matter-of-fact, and entirely unsentimental. (*Christendom*, Autumn, 1943, p. 482.) No more poignant explanation of the prevailing mood could be found than in the words of a Canadian minister who said, "This is the saddest war in history. We are not jubilant, but infinitely dejected. There is not a jot or atom of hatred in our hearts. . . . We expect nothing from this war except that everything sweet and precious will be crushed out of life for most of us. Nevertheless, we could do no other." (*C.C.*, LVI, 44, Nov. 1, 1939, p. 1347.)

### *The Just War Through A Glass Darkly*

If pacifism and the crusade idea are excluded the only position

23. *C.C.*, LVIII, 41, Oct. 8, 1941, pp. 1243-1244. For a similar Catholic view see *America*, Nov. 25, 1939, p. 185.

remaining in historic Christian thought is the ethic of the just war. But, the traditional concept of the just war has been subject to so much criticism of late and the incompatibility of its conditions with modern war so cogently displayed that some Christians who have rejected the other two positions cannot find a refuge here. Hence, the quest for a fourth position has been undertaken by the *Christian Century*. With extraordinary sensitivity to the pressure of the contemporary, this journal has responded to the impact of the times. All the confusion inherent in the situation itself has been vividly sensed: the all-engulfing quality of modern war which draws to itself every constructive effort despite the unwillingness of the contributor; the irrational character of a struggle which embraces the globe though no people desire it; the futility of the effort which vitiates the use of power for ideal ends; the undisciplined quality of a force which brooks no restrictions impeding victory; the impersonal character of a fight in which combatants strike invisible foes; the undiscriminating nature of weapons which smash alike arsenals and cathedrals and shatter equally troop trains and air-raid shelters filled with children; the blindness of a strife, the precise reasons for which may not become clear until ten years after the termination; the complexity of a war where rival imperialisms, nationalistic interests and clashing ideologies crisscross inextricably on a loom shaken by shifting alliances so that the solemn pronouncements of one day appear ironic to the next. In such a struggle, the *Christian Century* could discover no meaning and no morality. This is not a just war; it is just war. We are in the war and none of us can get out. We shall have to see it through in a spirit of inexpressible grief.

Such sadness is a combination of penitence for those sins which brought us to this pass, and sorrow, though not penitence, for what now has to be done. There is no evil conscience in fighting, for that which cannot be avoided cannot be wrong, but there is infinite regret that it should ever have become necessary and heaviness of heart for all the pain to be inflicted and endured. This mood is thoroughly Christian but the elimination

of all morality from the war is highly questionable. And whether it has altogether been removed is by no means clear. The contention is that Pearl Harbor made all the difference for us because our national interests came to be at stake. This interpretation could easily be squared with the ethic of the just war which takes over from the natural law the right of self-defense and incorporates it in the Christian ethic. But the *Christian Century* rules out this expedient by picturing the war as a case of self-defense on the part of every participant. This position amounts either to an acquiescence in a struggle for national existence which is not blessed because it is not Christian and is not disavowed because it cannot be escaped, or else this view is simply that of the just war in disguise. And such frequently it appears to be, because a victory for the United Nations is regarded by this journal as offering at least a better chance for what Richard Niebuhr ruefully calls "a just endurable peace." (C.C., LIX, 19, May 13, 1942, p. 632.)

### ***The Relatively Just War***

The traditional Christian ethic of the just war with due modification has come to commend itself to those Christians who have felt themselves constrained to endorse participation in this conflict on the side of the United Nations. There is no pretence of any absolute justice, but perhaps for that very reason there is all the greater insistence on the reality and pertinence of a relatively larger measure of justice on the Allied side. Reinhold Niebuhr, who did so much to produce a sense of contrition in American Christianity, has protested roundly that this contrition must not be suffered to obliterate moral distinctions. "We do not find it particularly impressive," he wrote in *Christianity and Crisis* (Feb. 10, 1941, p. 6), "to celebrate one's sensitive conscience by enlarging upon all the well-known evils of our western world and equating them with the evils of the totalitarian systems. It is just as important for Christians to be discriminating in their judgments, as for them to recognize the element of sin in all human endeavors." John Bennett protests very strongly against making the soldiers regard themselves merely as "vict-

times of a common tragedy or of God's judgment. It would make a vast difference to many of them if they could know that on what they do depends the possibility of justice and freedom for men everywhere." (C.Cr., Sept. 21, 1942, p. 1.)

The theory of the just war, one recalls, does not preclude an offensive on behalf of justice. The cause of the United Nations was just long before Pearl Harbor and had we taken the initiative in declaring war our cause would have been just and even more just had we not waited until our self-interests came to be so obviously involved.

### *The Just Object*

The just war theory calls for justice in the object of the war. The purpose must be to vindicate justice and restore peace. Precisely this objective is epitomized in the slogan of the "just and durable peace," and that is why the churches have been so very much preoccupied with plans for peace. The appeal of Karl Barth first to kill the bear and then to divide the bearskin has been stoutly met with the rejoinder that some plans must now be laid and some agreements reached if there is not to be a hopeless wrangle over the division. (*Christendom*, Autumn, 1943.) The churches at first outstripped governments in the concrete and drastic character of their proposals for the post-war world.<sup>24</sup> The whole life of man, political, social, economic and religious has been brought under review. The Church itself has been subjected to scrutiny and the Malvern Conference recognized the impertinence of advice to the world on the part of a Church which regarded her own privileges as sacrosanct. Churchmen are continually probing their own motives and endeavoring to bare and combat subtle and unrecognized prejudices. Henry P. Van Dusen, for example, subjects the peace proposals of the English and American churches to a searching comparison in which he shows that the Americans are more prone to advocate political reorganization and the British an economic overhauling because the sins of the British lie chiefly

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24. See Liston Pope, *Religious Proposals for World Order*, Dec. 1941.

in the area of political imperialism and the sins of the United States in the field of economic domination. (*C.Cr.*, May 17, 1943.)

### ***The Reasonable Chance***

The war to be just must have a reasonable chance of obtaining its objective, which means a reasonable chance of establishing a just and durable peace. Here a moral judgment is made contingent upon a fallible foresight and much of the difference between the liberal pacifists and the liberal non-pacifists has centered around the question of the probable consequences of their respective courses of action. The pacifists have been convinced by the failures of the last war and peace that ends and means are so intimately bound that war can never attain ideal objectives. The advocates of the just war are not oblivious to the risks or naive as to the chances. They recognize that war can

... never create democracy, justice, civilization or anything else. All one can claim is that it is sometimes necessary to restrain and destroy the forces set to render the achievement of these positive ends impossible.

This position involves certain obvious risks. There is the risk that after evil is destroyed, good will not grow; that after the world has been made safe for democracy, democracy itself will languish. There is also the desperate risk that the very process of destroying evil will destroy the good also (it is bound to destroy some of it), or that in destroying certain evils, it will bring other worse ones into existence. These risks are not to be denied, but there are circumstances when they must be taken. Better to disregard the *chance*, however grave, that justice and brotherhood will not grow even if one acts, than to disregard the *certainty* that tyranny and cruelty will be established if one does not. (John Knox, *C.Cr.*, III, 3, March 8, 1943.)

### ***The Authority of Government***

In the past the responsibility for the determination of the justice of the cause and the reasonableness of the chance was left to the government. This element in the just war theory is very largely obsolete in Protestantism. The theocratic tradition has so completely triumphed that no American Protestant body is

willing to leave to the State the determination of the justice of the cause. This the Church must decide. And so far has conscience been individualized by the struggles of the seventeenth century that no church ventures to pronounce a judgment without leaving liberty of dissent to its constituent members. Even the Lutheran Church, which in Germany has been accused with some reason of subservience to the State, in this country exhibits the same independence as other Protestant groups. The Louisville Convention of the United Lutherans in November, 1942, deleted from the recommendations of their executive board the statement which read, "We call upon our own people to give to our country the fullest measure of devotion and support, as the privilege and the duty of Christian citizens," though the board had earlier safeguarded itself by the qualification that "the conscience of the individual, informed and inspired by the Word of God, is the final authority in determining conduct."<sup>25</sup>

The Roman Catholic Church, however, retains in its entirety the ethic of the just war, including the view that under all ordinary circumstances the Christian citizen must accept the determination of the government as to the justice of the cause. For that reason, if for no other, the hierarchy in the United States have had no difficulty in endorsing the war. The Pope, however, claiming as subjects men in all the belligerent nations, endeavors to remain above the conflict and time and again voices the feelings of all Christendom as he looks with "depressing anguish upon the unhappy lot of the wounded and of the prisoners of war, upon the corporal and spiritual sufferings, the carnage, the destruction and ruin which aerial warfare leaves in its wake, . . . the depleted resources of nations, . . . the accumulation of sorrows and unspeakable anxieties . . . which suffocate men's spirits." (*N. Y. Times*, Dec. 25, 1941, p. 20.)

Unhappily, however, the self-interest which so readily predisposes Protestants to discern justice on the side of their respective national states, induced the author of this moving

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25. C.C., LIX, 44, Nov. 4, 1942, p. 1363; compare LVII, 6, Feb. 7, 1940, p. 189, and LVIII, 20, May 14, 1941, p. 663.

lament to pronounce a blessing on 3,000 of Mussolini's condottieri returning from participation in an adventure to overthrow the established government of Spain. The Pope assured these troops that they had brought him "immense consolation, for you have been the defenders of the Faith and of civilization." (*N. Y. Times*, June 12, 1939.)

### ***The Just Intention***

The just war calls further for a just intention, which is love toward the enemy. The churches at this point have not been fatuous enough to suppose that the soldier in the moment of combat loves his opponent. Yet they have insisted that there must be no vindictiveness and no hate. A special Commission of the World Council of Churches in 1939 declared that:

The churches should guard against becoming agencies for the propaganda of hatred. . . . While we may not forget our sense of solidarity with our own people and our loyalty to our respective nations, preaching must not seek to create hatred of other nations. War should not be presented as a holy crusade, but preaching should call men to repentance for a common sin and urge the righteousness of God's Kingdom. (C.C., LVI, 37, Sept. 13, 1939, p. 1107.)

The Federal Council of Churches in the United States in 1943 asserted:

Some pretend that hatred, however evil in itself and however destructive in its long range consequences, is nevertheless necessary for military victory. Even were this argument sound, we would reject it. . . . We call upon our fellow Christians, while striving after right and justice, to reject all desire for vengeance; to seek God's forgiveness for any hatred we may harbor. (C.C., LX, 14, April 7, 1943, p. 430.)

### ***The Just Conduct***

The just war must be characterized by just conduct. At this point those who call the present conflict a just war are sometimes more sensitive than are those who call it just war. The latter say that war has no morality and forfeit thereby the right to condemn any practice in war as immoral. Thus those who describe war simply as a necessity are sometimes less indignant

against unbridled violence than are those who retain a moral interpretation of the conflict.<sup>26</sup> *Christianity and Crisis* denounces the clean-up job of American airmen over the Japanese convoy near New Britain. The bragging over this strafing of life-boats is described as "shocking and surprising in view of the many protests Americans and British have made regarding the savage and heathenish actions of Japanese and Nazis in doing exactly the same thing." (C.Cr., March 22, 1943, p. 8.) Principal Cairns of the Scottish Church has declared with reference to reprisals that there are some things which no nation ought ever to do even at the risk of destruction. (C.C., LVI, 27, July 5, 1939, p. 862.) The Archbishop of Canterbury affirmed that there must be limitations to reprisals "below which, at whatever cost, honor will forbid us to fall." (C.C., LVII, 5, Jan. 31, 1940, p. 155.) The British *Church Times* declared: "The reason why, even to win the war or to win it quickly, this country cannot adopt methods of the jungle is simply that it does not wish the world to be a jungle when the war is finished." (C.C., LVII, 45, Nov. 6, 1940, p. 1365.)

### ***The Food Blockade***

Concern for the just conduct of the war has long occasioned grave misgiving with regard to the propriety of a food blockade applied not merely to combatants but even to entire populations. The problem became very much more acute in this struggle because the victims were in part our allies under enemy occupation. Churchmen were divided with regard to Mr. Hoover's plan to feed the invaded democracies without supplying Germany. Some accorded wholehearted support. Others opposed on the ground that the choice for the occupied countries lay between food and freedom. Early in 1943 a group of the clergy, who had opposed the effort to have food shipments passed through the blockade, explained that their former position arose from a feeling of delicacy with regard to pressure from the

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26. Compare C.C., LVII, 41, Oct. 9, 1940, p. 1236; LIX, 17, April 29, 1942, p. 551; LX, 16, April 21, 1943, pp. 478-9 and 483; LX, 33, August 18, 1943, p. 935.

United States on a Britain fighting for her life and ours, but when we became cobelligerents and England's crisis was past, the case was altered. (C.Cr., Feb. 8, 1943. Compare C.C., LX, 9, Mar. 3, 1943, p. 255.) A further explanation was offered that a counterproposal to the Hoover plan had been privately urged upon the British government from the outset. (C.C., LX, 13, March 31, 1943, p. 395.) During the discussion the American Friends Service Committee actually fed 84,000 children in France. (C.C., LIX, 17, April 29, 1942, p. 572.)

### ***Obliteration Bombing***

Of all the weapons used in this war the most ghastly has been obliteration bombing, and the most disquieting to the Christian conscience. A group of 28 American churchmen, most of them but not all pacifists, issued an appeal to Christian people to "examine themselves concerning their participation in this carnival of death." "In our time, as never before, war is showing itself in its logical colors. In the First World War, some shreds of the rules of war were observed to the end. Laws of war are intrinsically paradoxical; but so far as they went, they bore witness to the survival of some fragments of a Christian conscience among the combatants. But today these fragments are disappearing. The contesting parties pay little heed to the former decencies and chivalries, save among their own comrades." The plea was in the form of a preface to an article by Vera Brittain in which each of the foregoing statements was all too abundantly documented. (*Fellowship*, X, 3, March, 1944.) Of the havoc wrought she gave this summary: "According to a member of the German Government Statistics Office in Berlin, 1,200,086 German civilians were killed or reported missing, believed killed in air raids from the beginning of the war up to October 1, says a Zurich message. The number of people bombed out and evacuated owing to air-raid danger was 6,953,000. . . ."

Concretely what this means in human terms was described by a witness of the bombing of Berlin who reported: "It was nerve-shattering to see women, demented after the raids, crying

continuously for their lost children, or wandering speechless through the streets with dead babies in their arms."

In Hamburg the heat was so intense that even in cellar shelters bodies were incinerated more completely than in the process of cremation. The hurricane of flame sucked to itself the oxygen from surrounding regions so that many who escaped the fire died of suffocation. Men, having greater power of resistance, suffered less than women and children.

The protest of 28 clergymen called forth an unusually heavy mail addressed to the *New York Times* in which the letters were in the proportion of 50 to one opposing the protest. (March 9, 1944.) The letters to the signers were in a different temper. Fosdick reported a proportion of 60 to 40 unfavorable, John Haynes Holmes 50 to 50. Allan Knight Chalmers received 100 letters of which only three were antagonistic.

*The Commonweal*, a national Catholic weekly, scouted the fear that Vera Brittain's article and the signatures of the clergymen would turn the country pacifist.

There is a danger but it is an entirely different danger. It is that in their determination to win the war the people of this country will permit the use by the armed forces of any means whatsoever, legitimate or illegitimate, to win the war; that the words legitimate or illegitimate will come to have no meaning. . . . That is why we are giving as much publicity as we can to Vera Brittain's article. . . . And because we are convinced that it will be an appalling and disastrous thing if the argument against the 'saturation' bombing of cities is carried by pacifists exclusively. It will be a shameful thing, and it will not happen through any neglectfulness of ours. (XXXIX, 22, March 17, 1944, p. 531.)

*The Christian Century*, which after all does believe in the possibility of morality in the conduct of a war, added this comment: "If the war goes on, with obliteration bombing continuing to wipe out whole regions and populations, it is quite possible that in the hour of triumph the victors will find that they have created so much destruction, so much hate, so much misery, so much despair that the very well-springs of Occidental life have been poisoned not only for the vanquished but for the victors also." (LXI, 12, March 22, 1944, p. 361.)

## *The Treatment of the Conscientious Objector*

The maintenance of civil liberties may very well be regarded as an aspect of the just conduct of a war and in particular a liberal treatment of conscientious objectors. The position of the objector in this war is much better than in the last when he was inducted into the army and subjected to court martial. This time, save for a few errors, the objector has remained a civilian. Three possibilities are open to him: non-combatant service in the medical corps of the army, labor in a Civilian Public Service project, and a term in prison. The third alternative has appeared preferable to so many that three times the number have gone to the penitentiary in this war as in the last. Civilian Public Service Camps at first were solely under religious auspices. The men assigned to them have served throughout with no pay. The hope of the peace churches was that self-governing religious communities would be able to offer a testimony to their faith and to make a contribution to the public good. The outcome has been in many respects disappointing. Except among the Mennonites and to a lesser degree among the Brethren, the membership has been so diversified that to many minds the camps present less the aspect of a self-governing religious community than that of a concentration camp conducted by a religious agency acting for the government. The so-called "work of national importance" turned out to be largely a continuation of the made work of the depression era. The most rewarding as well as the most advertised work has been the "detached service" to which a limited number of men have been assigned as subjects for experimental purposes in medicine and nutrition, and for service as assistants in mental hospitals, in soil conservation and the fighting of forest fires. Some camps, with all their deficiencies, are preparing future leaders for all manner of adventurous social reform, and the expense of \$2,000,000 a year borne voluntarily by the religious bodies is itself a witness to the power of conscience.

## *Pacifism Reconsidered*

The greater part of the latter portion of this article has been

devoted to an analysis of the changes which have come to the minds of those Christians who endorse participation in this war. Changes equally have come to those Christians who cannot walk the same road. Pacifism has been reconsidered and the emergent type is more sober and more respectful of the soldier than were many earlier varieties. The evil with which we are confronted in our day is so much more monstrous than any we have known before that all Christians are filled with a spirit of resistance. The only question is as to the manner. Some cannot go beyond non-cooperation and denunciation. Others are convinced that the only way in which to resist tyranny abroad or at home is by force of arms. Many in the historic peace churches have reached this conclusion. The Church of the Brethren reports for the fall of 1943 a percentage of 81.7% of its young men in combatant service, 10.2% in non-combatant military service, and only 8.1% in Civilian Public Service. A recent survey reveals a similar situation among the Mennonites of the General Conference. The conservative Mennonites are able to report 100% of their men of military age as conscientious objectors only because the boys who responded to the draft have been disowned. Quaker leaders report a widespread abandonment among their young men of the traditional position. (Henry J. Cadbury in *C.C.*, LXI, 33, Aug. 16, 1944, pp. 945-46.) But disowning is not practiced by them. Mutual respect is rather the rule.

A certain sense of comradeship has come, therefore, to exist between those who resist in different ways. Certain pacifists call their stand vocational. They do not mean quite to put themselves in the position of Catholic monks, who adopt for themselves one out of several equally needful Christian callings. These pacifists would prefer that all Christians were of their persuasion, but recognize that those who are not of their mind are nevertheless pursuing the same ends by different means.<sup>27</sup>

And non-pacifists are not to be obstructed in the conscientious discharge of their duty by pacifists. Bertram Pickard,

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27. Elton Trueblood in the *Atlantic Monthly*, Dec., 1940, and *C.Cr.*, Nov. 3, 1940, and C. J. Cadoux, *Christian Pacifism Re-examined*, 1940.

for example, feels that so long as England had not renounced the method of war she would have been on sounder moral ground to have used arms against the Italian rape of Abyssinia rather than like Pilate to have washed her hands.<sup>28</sup> And that being so, if England should engage in a punitive war against injustice, a pacifist should not lobby or vote against military appropriations.

The cogency of this view, at least in wartime, would scarcely be contested, but other difficult questions then arise. Ought not the pacifist either to go farther and support his nation in a relatively righteous endeavor or else withdraw still farther and abstain from participation in political life even in peace time, when so many policies are formulated which in an extremity will be defended by war? Some critics urge that pacifists should become virtual monks in the political sphère, as certain sects such as the Mennonites have commonly done. Other pacifist groups, like the Quakers, have been ill persuaded of this view and have occupied seats in parliaments and legislatures. John Bright is a notable example of a Quaker in parliament. His position is instructive, for, although he withstood every British war during his public career, he never once did so on grounds of pacifism but only on grounds of public policy. In other words he participated in the political life of a non-pacifist nation as a liberal rather than as a pacifist.

### *The Unity of the Churches*

The searching of heart manifest in all quarters has ministered to a spirit of humility and to the preservation of the bond of unity within the church. A deeper reason why the seamless robe has not been rent is that pacifists and non-pacifists operate within the framework of a common set of presuppositions. Several statements have been made as to their joint convictions. (C.C., LVIII, 27, July 2, 1941, pp. 859-60; LVII, 36, Sept. 4, 1940, pp. 1070-72.) The Christian pacifist is closer to the Christian crusader than to the selfish isolationist, and the Christian war-

28. "Peacemaker's Dilemma," *Pendle Hill Pamphlet*, no. 16.

rior is closer to the Christian pacifist than to the militarist jingo. No Christian could work with a devotee of the totalitarian state, even though he might be fanatically sincere. Of itself sincerity may be a ground only for pity, not for respect, and certainly not for cooperation. The principles which unite must outweigh those which divide. And in the Church they do.

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